

IMPACT OF CAREGIVER CHARACTER ON ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This work is an exploration on the impact of caregiver's characteristics on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria. This study adopted the correlational research design. This research design was adopted to enable the researcher investigate the impact of caregivers character on the organizational leadership across early childhood centers in Rivers State. This study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The population of this study was all the 1,117 caregivers in 572 early childcare centers in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 320 caregivers, however, a total of 300 caregivers participated in the study. The instrument for data collection for this study was a researcher designed questionnaire titled "Caregivers' Character and Organizational Leadership Questionnaire (CCOLQ)". The reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach's alpha reliability test method to obtain a reliability index of 0.76. The research questions and hypotheses were answered and tested using linear regression at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study established that there were significant relationships between caregivers' traits, caregivers' values and caregivers' virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State. The study recommended amongst others that caregivers should strive to develop and poses good character traits so as to enable them exhibit good leadership qualities with a view to driving early childhood center development

Keywords: Caregivers, Character, Organizational Leadership.

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of Early Childhood Education (ECE) is the education given to children of ages from three to five years plus in an educational institution. It is usually well organised and coordinated with regular and trained teachers and other professionals who help to promote the child's all-round development. It helps in preparing children for the primary level of education. This is popularly referred to in Nigeria as nursery school; it is usually registered with the state ministry of education -which supervises the activities of such establishments. The Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) stated that, learning begins at birth. This implies that all countries of the world should not only expand access to early childhood education, but also ensure that the quality of services provided at the various preschool education centers do not inhibit or affect negatively in any way the overall development and well-being of the children. It has been observed that while government pays attention to the 'education' of children from the age of three years up to the age of their entry into primary school, little or nothing is done for those below the age of three years. According to UNESCO (2006), in many developing countries, early childhood education is not a priority of the governments. Activities of early childhood education are usually carried out in centers known as early childhood centers. The successful realization of the goals and objective of early childhood centers as an institution is largely hinged on the organizational leadership of such centers.

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more organized and logical in meaning. It is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2007). Leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. In a business setting, this can mean directing workers and colleagues with a strategy to meet the company's needs. This leadership definition captures the essentials of being able to inspire others and being prepared to do so. Effective leadership is based upon ideas (whether original or borrowed), but won't happen unless those ideas can be communicated to others in a way that engages them enough to act as the leader wants them to act (Ward, 2019). Thom-Otuya (2012) stated that leadership is a process through which persons influence others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. According to Zeitchik (2012), leadership is inspiring others to pursue vision within the parameters set, to the extent that it becomes a shared effort, a shared vision, and a shared success. Kruse (2013) posits that leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal. It is worthy of note that all these definitions have a couple of processes in common: a person influences others through social influence, not power, to get something accomplished (bosses use power to get things done); leadership requires others, who are not necessarily direct-reports, to get something accomplished; and there is a need to accomplish something.

Organizational leadership is a field of institutional management that specifically relates to meeting the challenges and goals brought by both individual employee and an organization as a whole. Organizational leaders often rise to top administrative and executive positions of their organizations because of their abilities to manage the present while looking toward the future. It means understanding both the strengths and weaknesses of the organization's workforce, business plan and day-to-day operations. Organizational leaders use their skills and knowledge to manage and strengthen the components of an organization by implementing change, confronting problems and creating a positive and productive workplace (Follari, 2007). Organizational

leadership requires ethics, communication and vision. It may include confronting ethically questionable situations. A manager can draw on his or her organizational leadership education and experience in order to remain impartial and engaged. This may also require high levels of skilled communication. The ability to talk to groups as well as individuals calmly, clearly and to practice active listening is incredibly important. Organizational leaders must have a vision for the future. They must have the ability to solve problems regarding employee relations and productivity as well as make decisions that affect the direction of the organization. Vision is nothing without leadership. In order to enact and implement change, an individual must have leadership and motivational skills (Bogle, 2018).

Organizations need strong leadership for optimum effectiveness. Leadership, as we know, is a trait which is both inbuilt and can be acquired also. Organizational leadership deals with both human psychology as well as expert tactics. Organizational leadership emphasizes on developing leadership skills and abilities that are relevant across the organizations. It means the potential of the individuals to face the hard times in the industry and still grow during those times. It clearly identifies and distinguishes the leaders from the managers. The leader should have potential to control group of individuals (Rodd, 2013). An ideal organizational leader should not dominate over others. He should guide the individuals under him, give them a sense of direction to achieve organizational goals successfully and should act responsibly. He should be optimistic for sure. He should be empathetic and should understand the need of the group members. An organizational leader should not only lead others individually but also manage the actions of the group. Individuals who are highly ambitious, have high energy level, an urge to lead, self-confidence, intelligence, have thorough knowledge of job, are honest and flexible are more likely to succeed as organizational leaders. Individuals who learn the organizational leadership develop abilities and skills of teamwork, effective communication, conflict resolution, and group problem solving techniques. Organizational leaders clearly communicate organizational mission, vision and policies; build employees morale, ensure efficient business operations; help employees grow professionally and contribute positively towards organizations mission. The role of the leader is to structure the way that the inputs of others are combined to produce organizational outputs. But what distinguishes an organizational leader (OL) from, say, a functional manager or an executive is that organization leaders combine business understanding with their roles as "future visionaries and forward-thinkers who lead broad initiatives using integrity and ethics (Whitebook, 2010).

Leadership in early education is crucial for enhancing pedagogical quality. Leadership is about purpose, and for ECEC settings that purpose is embodied in pedagogical leadership (Aubrey, 2011). While strong pedagogical leadership underpins the way a setting operates, it is also acknowledged that effective leaders do many other things, such as organising and managing resources and time, hiring and managing staff, and making genuine connections with children and staff, families, communities and other organizations. Leadership is demonstrated by early childhood educators in every role within the profession. In addition to possessing expertise in specific areas such as understanding how children develop and learn, working with families, or supervising staff, early childhood education leaders need to understand the early childhood system itself and how policy shapes the quality of services available to children and families. A starting point for providing leadership is to evaluate one's current understanding of the early care and education system, reflect regularly to assess changes in one's knowledge, and determine how that understanding and knowledge can continue to develop (Whitebook & Austin, 2009).

The diverse sectors in the early education profession challenge leaders to collaborate across many types of services and among variable policies (Rodd, 2013). Early childhood education services do not exist in isolation, and leaders are further challenged to understand the complex array of issues that impact the profession, develop skills to work collaboratively across disciplines and interest groups, and improve the quality of early care and education services that influence life opportunities for children and their families. Leaders in early childhood education usually enter the profession with a profound love of children. They have experience and key skills: patience, organization and flexibility. They embrace diversity, and they can communicate effectively with children, teachers, parents and the community. However, as early childhood education progresses, efforts are being made to expand programs and improve the quality of schools and daycare centers. It is, in part, up to the leaders already in the field to see that they are ready for change as there are several important qualities that will make these leaders successful (Follari, 2007).

Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership knowledge and skills. However, we know that we have personality that can influence our actions. If a leader has the desire and willpower, one can become an effective leader. Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. A dedicated leader inspires his workers into higher levels of teamwork. There are certain things that an effective and dedicated leader must be, know, and, do. These do not come naturally, but are acquired through continual work and study. Effective and dedicated leaders are continually working and studying to improve their leadership skills meaning they are not resting on their success (Aubrey, 2011). While leadership is learned, the skills, and knowledge possessed by the leader can be influenced by his or her attributes or traits, values, and virtues which forms his or her character. Knowledge and skills contribute directly to the process of leadership, while the other attributes give the leader certain characteristics that make him or her unique, meaning that skills, knowledge, and attributes make the Leader more effective and dedicated.

There is no consensus on a definition of character. In fact, there seems to be as many definitions as there are scholars whose research and writing focus on character (Conger & Hollenbeck, 2010). Character refer to the series of psychic and emotional qualities that presents an individual and that will of course affect their behavior, thoughts, actions, among others. The word character serves to express the condition that something or someone and that is that which makes it unique and different from others. A character is understood as a set of stable, individual characteristics of a person expressing an attitude toward the world and determining typical ways of behavior in certain life situations and circumstances. Differences in the properties of needs, self-awareness, will, abilities, temperament do not exhaust the whole wide complex of individual characteristics. The differences existing between people are diverse and concern all aspects of their "omnipresent" the psyche. People differ throughout the mental makeup, the manner of behavior, the relationships that bind them to the world of other people and things. For each person, the uniqueness, the uniqueness of the psyche and the personality are characteristic. This is the psychological individuality of a person.

This study focused on caregivers' leadership character, not because it is necessarily more important than competencies and commitment, but because it is the most difficult to define, measure, assess and develop. Perhaps, this is because our educational system and organizations are so competency focused; maybe because we just do not know what to think about character; possibly because character seems such an old-fashioned word; maybe because we are reluctant to discuss examples of poor character with our colleagues in the workplace, or because we believe

we cannot assess character objectively. Yet, character is central, and an important element of leadership particularly for the kind of cross-enterprise leadership that is essential in complex early childhood centers which cannot be ignored. Character fundamentally shapes how caregivers engage the world around them, what they notice, what they reinforce, who they engage in conversation, what they value, what they choose to act on, how they decide among others. The intent of this study is to define those dimensions of leadership character that are most important in today's rapidly changing and turbulent organizational environment and examine the possible impact of these characters on effective organizational leadership. In the discussion of character, focus will be on personality traits, values and virtues as the dimensions of character.

Character traits are defined as habitual patterns of thought, behavior and emotion that are considered to be relatively stable in Caregivers across situations in early childhood centers (ECE) and over time. Traits are not fixed as introverts, but may be able to learn how to behave in a less introverted way, while extroverts may learn how to control and moderate their extroverted behaviors when situations require it. There are literally a great number of personality traits from what have been described in the psychology literature. However, through statistical techniques such as factor analysis, five broad domains, or dimensions of personality have emerged, and are now widely used in various forms in employee selection and assessment in early childhood centers (Crossan, Gandz, & Seijts, 2012; Ailwood, 2007; Arthur et al., 2007).

The 'Big-Five' traits according to Crossan, Gandz and Seijts (2012) are: conscientiousness; openness to experience; extroversion; agreeableness, and neuroticism. These traits feature prominently in tests or inventories and they have come to be known as the FFM, or the five-factor model, a robust model of personality. Although, these traits dominate the personality literature of leadership character, there are various other traits that warrant consideration and measurement, such as self-confidence, ambition, perfectionism, dominance, rigidity, persistence and impulsivity. Some personality traits can be inherited while some also evolve through life experiences and deliberate developmental exercises such as coaching. These traits have the capacity to influence a caregiver's leadership capabilities with respect to effectively leading an early childhood centers.

Ganguly, Bardhan, Saha and Rameshwar (2017) conducted a study on the influence of personality traits on leadership roles on Conflict Management Style within the Organization. The study revealed that the behavior of an individual is known to be influenced by the activation of traits like personality factors; behavior of leaders and conflict resolution styles. The leadership role perspectives play an important role in the behavior of leaders as building blocks of organizations. One of the important behavioral indicators of leader is their conflict resolution styles. It was further stated that conflict resolution style is a major concern in today's business houses due to its importance in increasing organizational efficiency, problem-solving as well as captivating and retaining employees. As a result, it is of great interest to explain the influencing power of personality on leadership role to solve the conflicts in corporate sectors.

Alkahtani, Abu-Jarad, Sulaiman and Nikbin (2011) conducted a study to investigate the influence of the Big Five Dimensions of personality of the Malaysian Managers and the leadership styles these managers use on their leading change capabilities. The results of the study showed that Extroversion personality trait as well as involvement leadership style were positively related with leading change. Both openness to experience and emotional stability were significantly and positively correlated with consultative leadership style that the managers use. Involvement of leadership style was found to be significantly and positively correlated with

leading change ($R^2=.38$) In conclusion, the study showed a positively significant correlation between personality of managers, their leadership styles and their leading change capabilities

Another caregivers' character necessary for organizational leadership in early childhood setting is the character value. Values are beliefs that people especially caregivers have about what is important or worthwhile to them. Values influence behavior because caregivers seek more of what they value. If they can get more net value by behaving in certain ways, they will. Values therefore can be seen as the guideposts for behavior. Some caregivers value their autonomy very highly, some value social interaction, some value the opportunity to be creative, some value work-life balance, and so on. Values may change with life stages and according to the extent to which a particular value has already been realized. An individual's values are in large part derived from the social environment in which he or she lives (Schwartz, 1992). An important sub-set of values consists of those with ethical or social dimensions, such as honesty, integrity, compassion, fairness, charity and social responsibility. Such moral values may be strongly or weakly held and influence behavior accordingly specially in organizational leadership of early childhood centers. Expression of value by caregivers as leaders may experience some form of challenges such as when loyalty conflicts with honesty, when fairness conflicts with pragmatism, or when social responsibility conflicts with obligation to shareholders, people become conflicted. And when their actions are inconsistent with their values, they either experience guilt, anger and embarrassment. People try to minimize such cognitive dissonance by rationalizing or even denying their behavior, discounting the consequences of it or simply blaming others.

Ali (2017) in a study on how leadership skills can influence the value of an organization reported that leaders have an outstanding impact on organizational culture and that employees tend to follow leaders in professional and cultural ways leading to a broad impact on the organization as a whole, He stated that Leadership is about establishing a clear vision, communicating it and resolving the immediate conflicts among the employees or facing the organization as a whole. Going forward, he pointed out that leaders are tasked with efficiently guiding organizational goal achievement while considering team member skills essential to produce the desired productivity. Since leadership is an aspect of management, it is necessary to establish that the management is well-equipped with leadership skills. Effective leadership can influence the organizational values such as honesty, respect, ethics and tolerance among others by demonstrating an ideal attitude in the workplace, establishing a vision among the employees, reinforcing accountability, motivating the employees, making a vision plan for the culture and values and by coaching the co-workers.

Again, for caregivers to effectively lead in early childhood center, they must possess the character of virtue. Philosophers have defined certain clusters of traits, values and behaviors as "good," and referred to them as virtues. Virtues are like behavioral habits, something that is exhibited fairly consistently. For example, Aristotle wrote that: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." Aristotle identified twelve virtues that a successful leader should possess to make of effective leadership of any organization. They are: Courage, Temperance, Generosity, Magnificence, Magnanimity, Right ambition, Good temper, Friendliness, Truthfulness, Wit, and Justice. The twelfth virtue is Practical Wisdom, which is necessary to live the "good life" and thus achieve happiness or well-being (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Consider the virtue of Courage for instance; traits such as openness to experience, self-confidence and persistence contribute to individuals acting in distinctive ways. For example, putting themselves on the line and acting in a courageous fashion. Having values such as

integrity, treating individuals with respect and achievement predisposes caregivers to demonstrate courageous behavior. Furthermore, a caregiver with integrity tends to act in a different way than a caregiver who lacks integrity, even if both caregivers find themselves in the same situation. Then, there is a set of actual behaviors that individuals engage in on a fairly consistent basis (meaning across situations and over time) and that friends, colleagues and observers characterize or describe as courageous. These behaviors may have become societal expectations with respect to leading an early childhood center effectively.

Another study by Hendriks, Burger, Rijsenbilt, Pleeging and Commandeur (2017) on virtuous leadership and employee flourishing: the mediating role of work engagement opined that Virtuous leadership is an emerging concept in the business ethics literature. Despite its potential significance in creating thriving organizations with flourishing employees, little is known about how virtuous leadership relates to follower outcomes. The study examines whether, why, and under what conditions employees with more virtuous supervisors flourish more. About 983 respondents working in various industries in the United Kingdom and the United States participated in the study. Using structural equation modeling, the study found that a supervisor's virtuous leadership, as evaluated by the employee, is positively associated with the employee's flourishing. This positive association is fully mediated by the employee's higher work engagement and holds for a wide variety of public and private sector employees from different industries. All five individual leader virtues and various measures of leader virtuousness considered here relate positively to employee flourishing. These findings underscore that promoting virtuous leadership is a promising pathway to improving work engagement and employee well-being.

It is against the above stated background that this present study seeks to investigate the impact of caregiver character (traits, values and virtues) on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Problem Identification

Despite the recognized importance of leadership in the early childhood educational centers of the nation, the organizational leadership of caregivers in early childhood centers seems not to be yielding the desired result. The cause of this failure is likely to be related to the character caregivers put up in the organizational leadership of our early childhood centers which is incapable of leading to a sufficiently managed and motivated workforce in early childhood centers. The competency and skill level of caregivers does challenge them to develop a personality traits, values and virtues which encompass critical thinking, creativity and collaboration.

Studies have been conducted on the use of some leadership styles to enhance caregivers' organizational leadership in early childhood centers especially regarding the application of concepts in real life situations. Most of the studies were based on the skill and competency levels of the caregivers which do not involve the character possessed by these caregivers while confronting real life early childhood leadership problems where most of the studies that utilized the caregivers characters were done outside Rivers State.

This is the problem that instigated this study as this present study is being designed to challenge, inspire and motivate the caregivers to effectively lead in early childhood centers. Thus, the study will be investigating the impact of caregiver character (traits, values and virtues) on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of caregiver character (traits, values and virtues) on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

In specific terms, the study intends:

- To examine the impact of caregivers' character traits on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- To determine the impact of caregivers' character values on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- To ascertain the impact of caregiver character virtues on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered to obtain the findings or results of the study:

- What is the impact of caregivers' character traits on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- What is the impact of caregivers' character values on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- What is the impact of caregiver character virtues on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

- **H₀₁:** There is no significance relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- **H₀₂:** There is no significance relationship between caregivers' character values and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- **H₀₃:** There is no significance relationship between caregiver character virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

INSTRUMENT AND METHODS

Design

The design for the study was the correlational research design because data was collected from a sample of students in order to answer questions and test hypotheses concerning the impact and relationship between the caregivers character and organizational leadership in early childhood centers.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of the study consists of all 1,117 caregivers across all early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample size of 320 caregivers in early childhood centers in Rivers State

was used for the study. The sample size was determined through Taro Yamene's formula while sample was drawn using the simple random sampling technique. The 300 caregivers who eventually participated in the study constitute the respondents for the study.

Instrumentation

The instrument for data collection of this research work was through the use of a carefully researcher designed questionnaire titled "Caregivers' Character and Organizational Leadership Questionnaire (CCOLQ)" The questionnaire was constructed in such a way that would be useful to the research questions and hypotheses stated earlier in this work. The questionnaire was divided into section A and B. Section A contained personal information about the respondent, while section B was on general data intended to elicit information from the respondent on caregivers' traits, values, virtues and early child center leadership. A copy of the questionnaire after drafting was given to 3 experts in measurement and evaluation for validation. The correction made by the experts was effected to produce the final copy of the instrument used for the study. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the Cronbach alpha reliability test model for a measure of its stability. Copies of the questionnaire were given to 20 students who were not part of the sample to fill. The data obtained from the 20 respondents were coded into the SPSS software to get a reliability coefficient of 0.76 which was high enough for the study to continue.

Method of Data Collection

Copies of the instrument were administered to the respondents by the researcher and two research assistants. Instructions guiding the filling of the questionnaire were explained to the respondents. The researcher supervises the filling of the questionnaires and retrieves filled copies on the spot.

Data Analysis

Data collected using the questionnaire was analyzed using the SPSS version 20 to answer and test the hypotheses. The simple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the impact of caregivers' character traits on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

H₀₁: There is no significance relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

A: Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.779 ^a	.607	.604	.36808		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Character Traits						
B: Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.310	.177		7.397	.000
	Character Traits	.616	.050	.779	12.275	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Leadership						
C: ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	20.413	1	20.413	150.670	.000 ^b
	Residual	40.373	298	.135		
	Total	60.785	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Leadership						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Character Traits						

Part 'B' of Table 1 shows that the summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria might be described as strong and positive (Beta=.779). The R-square value of .607 in part 'A' shows a 60.7% impact of caregivers' character traits to organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The regression equation $y=1.310+.616x$ shows that an increase caregivers' character traits might lead to an increase organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The result of F-statistic shows that there is a significance relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria (F1, 298=150.670, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of caregivers' character values on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

H₀₂: There is no significance relationship between caregivers' character values and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregivers' character values and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

A: Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.622 ^a	.387	.381	.44829
a. Predictors: (Constant), Value2				

B: Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.999	.224		13.391	.000
	Value2	.135	.064	.622	2.114	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership

C: ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	.898	1	.898	134.468	.000 ^b
	Residual	59.887	298	.201		
	Total	60.785	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership

b. Predictors: (Constant), Value2

Part 'B' of Table 2 shows that the summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregivers' character values and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria might be described as strong and positive (Beta=.622). The R-square value of .387 in part 'A' shows a 38.7% impact of caregivers' character values to organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The regression equation $y=2.999+.135x$ shows that an increase caregivers' character values might lead to an increase organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The result of F-statistic shows that there is a significance relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria (F1, 298=134.468, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

Research Question 3: What is the impact of caregiver character virtues on organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

H₀₃: There is no significance relationship between caregiver character virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

Table 3: Summary of linear relationship between caregiver character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

A: Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.668 ^a	.446	.441	.37164

a. Predictors: (Constant), Character Virtues

B: Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.484	.168		8.839	.000
	Character Virtues	.577	.048	.668	11.921	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership

C: ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.627	1	19.627	142.102	.000 ^b
	Residual	41.159	298	.138		
	Total	60.785	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership
b. Predictors: (Constant), Character Virtues

Part 'B' of Table 3 shows that the summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregiver character virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria might be described as strong and positive (Beta=.668). The R-square value of .446 in part 'A' shows a 44.6% impact of caregivers' character virtues to organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The regression equation $y=1.484+.577x$ shows that an increase caregivers' character virtues might lead to an increase organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The result of F-statistic shows that there is a significance relationship between caregivers' character virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria ($F_1, 298=142.102, p<.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

DISCUSSION

Relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

Findings as indicated in part 'B' of Table 1 shows that the summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria might be described as strong and positive (Beta=.779). The R-square value of .607 in part 'A' shows a 60.7% impact of caregivers' character traits to organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The regression equation $y=1.310+.616x$ shows that an increase caregivers' character traits might lead to an increase organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The result of F-statistic shows that there is a significance relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria ($F_1, 298=150.670, p<.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The finding implied that organizational leadership in early childhood centers is to a great extent dependent on the character traits of the caregivers. This finding is consistent with that of Ganguly, Bardhan, Saha and Rameshwar (2017) who revealed in a study on the influence of personality traits on leadership roles on Conflict Management Style within the Organization that the behavior of an individual is known to be influenced by the activation of traits like personality factors; behavior of leaders and conflict resolution styles. The leadership role perspectives play an important role in the behavior of leaders as building blocks of organizations. One of the important behavioral indicators of leader is their conflict resolution styles. It was further stated that conflict resolution style is a major concern in today's business houses due to its importance in increasing organizational efficiency, problem-solving as well as captivating and retaining employees. As a result, it is of great interest to explain the influencing power of personality on leadership role to solve the conflicts in corporate sectors. Alkahtani, Abu-Jarad, Sulaiman and Nikbin (2011) reported that Extroversion personality trait as well as

involvement leadership style were positively related with Leading Change. Both Openness to Experience and Emotional Stability were significantly and positively correlated with Consultative Leadership Style that the managers use.

Relationship between caregivers' character values and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

According to the finding as captured in part 'B' of Table 2, the summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregivers' character values and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria might be described as strong and positive (Beta=.622). The R-square value of .387 in part 'A' shows a 38.7% impact of caregivers' character values to organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The regression equation $y=2.999+.135x$ shows that an increase caregivers' character values might lead to an increase organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The result of F-statistic shows that there is a significance relationship between caregivers' character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria ($F_{1, 298}=134.468, p<.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The result of this finding depicts that caregivers' character values predicted to a great extent on organizational leadership in early childhood centers. This result concurs with that of Ali (2017) who in a study on how leadership skills can influence the value of an organization reported that leaders have an outstanding impact on organizational culture and that employees tend to follow leaders in professional and cultural ways leading to a broad impact on the organization as a whole, He stated that Leadership is about establishing a clear vision, communicating it and resolving the immediate conflicts among the employees or facing the organization as a whole. Going forward, he pointed out that leaders are tasked with efficiently guiding organizational goal achievement while considering team member skills essential to produce the desired productivity. Since leadership is an aspect of management, it is necessary to establish that the management is well-equipped with leadership skills. Effective leadership can influence the organizational values such as honesty, respect, ethics and tolerance among others by demonstrating an ideal attitude in the workplace, establishing a vision among the employees, reinforcing accountability, motivating the employees, making a vision plan for the culture and values and by coaching the co-workers.

Relationship between caregiver character traits and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria

Result of finding in part 'B' of Table 3 shows that the summary of linear regression analysis on the relationship between caregiver character virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria might be described as strong and positive (Beta=.668). The R-square value of .446 in part 'A' shows a 44.6% impact of caregivers' character virtues to organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The regression equation $y=1.484+.577x$ shows that an increase caregivers' character virtues might lead to an increase organizational leadership in early childhood centers. The result of F-statistic shows that there is a significance relationship between caregivers' character virtues and organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria ($F_{1, 298}=142.102, p<.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 alpha levels. This result means that organizational leadership in early childhood centers depends considerably on the character virtues possess by the caregivers. This finding is

in line with that of Hendriks, Burger, Rijsenbilt, Pleeging and Commandeur (2017) who asserted in a study on virtuous leadership and employee flourishing: the mediating role of work engagement that Virtuous leadership is an emerging concept in the business ethics literature. Despite its potential significance in creating thriving organizations with flourishing employees, little is known about how virtuous leadership relates to follower outcomes. The study found that a supervisor's virtuous leadership, as evaluated by the employee, is positively associated with the employee's flourishing. This positive association is fully mediated by the employee's higher work engagement and holds for a wide variety of public and private sector employees from different industries. All five individual leader virtues and various measures of leader virtuousness considered relate positively to employee flourishing as a leader. These findings underscore that promoting virtuous leadership is a promising pathway to improving work engagement as well as employee and institution well-being.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from this study, it could be concluded that the character traits, values and virtues of a caregiver have a strong positive impact on organizational leadership in early childhood centers. There were however a significant relationships between character traits, values and virtues and the organizational leadership in early childhood centers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings and conclusion of this study:

- Caregivers should strive to develop good personality traits for effective leadership in early childhood centers.
- Apart from possessing leadership skills and competency, caregivers should ensure they apply good values in the organizational leadership of early childhood centers.
- To effectively lead in early childhood centers, caregivers should imbibe character virtues so as to propel and motivate others toward the common goal of the educational institutions.

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