



**PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLES AND IT'S EFFICACY ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAKURDI
METROPOLIS
BY**

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Abstract

This study investigated principal's leadership styles and its efficacy on the management of private secondary Schools in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 1716 teachers drawn from private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. Proportionate sampling technique was used to draw 10% of the total population for the work. A total of 176 respondents were used for the study. Questionnaire titled "Efficacy of Principal's Leadership Styles in the Management of Private Secondary Schools (EPLSMPSSQ) drawn by the researcher was used for the study. Mean and standard deviation was used for data analysis while chi square was used to test the hypothesis. The findings from the study revealed that, both democratic and charismatic leadership styles employed by principals have a significant positive effect on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. The study recommended that Educational Authorities and school boards should provide training programmes focusing on democratic leadership



styles for principals and also train principals on charismatic leadership style to help them develop their ability to inspire and motivate staff.

Keywords: Leadership, management, principal, school, styles.

Introduction

School leadership is a fundamental determinant of the success and functionality of educational institutions. Principals, as primary leaders within schools, play essential roles in shaping policies, fostering academic excellence, and developing a positive school climate. In private secondary schools, where resources may vary greatly, the principal's leadership style can be a determining factor in achieving organizational goals and maintaining operational efficiency (North House, 2021). Furthermore, a private secondary school principal is the chief administrator and leader responsible for managing all aspects of a privately funded secondary school. Effective leadership is not only essential for the internal administration but also influences the external image and reputation of the institution, thereby attracting more students and enhancing community support.

The significance of leadership styles in educational administration has been emphasized by Bush (2020) who argued that different leadership approaches yield distinct outcomes in school environments. In addition, a secondary school principal's leadership style refers to the approach or set of behaviors a principal adopts to guide, influence, and manage the institution. This style profoundly impacts the school's culture, decision-making processes, staff motivation, and overall effectiveness. Different leadership styles such as democratic, authoritarian, transformational, and charismatic shape how principals interact with teachers, students, and other stakeholders, as well as how they handle challenges related to resource allocation, discipline, and academic performance. This paper sought to adopt the efficacy of democratic and charismatic principal's leadership styles on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.

Democratic and charismatic leadership styles, in particular, have been associated with positive outcomes, albeit in different ways. Democratic leadership, which emphasizes participatory decision-making, can foster a sense of ownership and commitment among staff and students (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). This inclusive approach is often effective in building a collaborative culture where staff are more willing to contribute ideas, knowing that their input is valued and considered. On the other hand, charismatic leadership, characterized by the personal appeal and vision of the leader, can inspire and motivate followers in unique ways. Charismatic



leaders often evoke strong loyalty and a sense of purpose among their staff, which can lead to improved morale and performance. In the context of private secondary schools in Makurdi, a charismatic principal could serve as a role model for both staff and students, fostering a motivational atmosphere conducive to learning and personal development. However, some studies caution that charismatic leadership may create dependency on the leader's presence and vision, which could be a limitation when sustaining the school's goals independently of the leader's influence. In Nigeria, and particularly within Benue State, leadership in private secondary schools is under increased scrutiny as communities expect high standards of educational delivery despite economic and social challenges (Okeke & Mordi, 2022). Principals in secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis must navigate complex issues, such as limited resources, student discipline, and staff recruitment and retention, which are unique to private institutions. These challenges often demand a flexible yet strong leadership approach that can balance the needs of all stakeholders while ensuring the institution's growth. The leadership style adopted by a principal could, therefore, be the determining factor in how effectively these issues are managed. Existing literature on leadership styles in Nigerian educational institutions has largely focused on public schools, with fewer studies examining private schools. This gap in research has implications for educational policy and management strategies, as private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis may have unique operational dynamics that require a more tailored approach to leadership (Adeyemi & Adu, 2022). Understanding the specific impact of democratic and charismatic leadership styles on the management of these schools could help identify the best practices for school principals, thereby improving administrative outcomes and overall school performance.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing focus on educational reform, many private secondary schools in Makurdi struggle to meet management standards due to various factors, including leadership styles. While some principals employ a democratic approach that encourages input from staff and students, others adopt a charismatic style that hinges on personal influence. However, it remains unclear which of these styles yields greater management efficacy within the specific educational environment of Makurdi. Existing research on leadership styles in Nigerian secondary schools has generally emphasized public schools, leaving a gap regarding private institutions (Ojo, 2020). This lack of data hinders the ability of private school stakeholders to make informed decisions regarding leadership practices that could optimize management outcomes. Furthermore, it is unknown how the unique challenges faced by private institutions in Makurdi Metropolis may require specific leadership adaptations. Thus, there is a need to examine the impact of democratic



and charismatic leadership styles on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. Such research could provide insights into which approach is more effective in addressing the management issues endemic to this area, potentially guiding principles toward adopting the most beneficial leadership style for their schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate secondary in school principal's leadership styles and it's efficacy on the management of private secondary Schools in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate the efficacy of democratic leadership style on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.
2. Ascertain the influence of charismatic leadership style of school principals on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the efficacy of principal's democratic leadership style on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis?
2. How does principal's charismatic leadership style influence management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. School principal's democratic leadership styles has on influence on management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.
2. School principals charistmatic leadership style has no significant influence on the management of secondary schools principals

Review of Related Literature

Principal's Leadership Styles

Principal's leadership styles are characterized by the methods and strategies leaders adopt to influence their schools' operations and culture. They include approaches such as transformational, transactional, and democratic leadership, each offering distinct ways of engaging teachers and students. The choice of leadership style directly impacts the effectiveness of the school environment, affecting motivation, job satisfaction, and ultimately, student performance (Oguche, 2023) In the same vein Eze and Onwuka,(2023) sees leadership styles of principals to the specific behaviors and techniques that school leaders use to navigate the complexities of educational management. These styles ranges from authoritative to participative



and transformational styles each shaping the dynamics within the school and influencing the

Engagement levels of staff and students. The principal's leadership style not only dictates decision-making processes but also establishes the school's overall vision and operational efficacy.

Principal's leadership styles encapsulate the various approaches that school leaders utilize to motivate and guide their staff and students toward achieving educational objectives. These styles include autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership, each offering different degrees of participation and influence within the school environment. Effective leadership is critical, as it establishes a positive school climate that supports collaborative practices and enhances the academic success of students.

Management of Private Secondary Schools: The management of private secondary schools encompasses the organizational processes, structures, and practices implemented to ensure effective operation and quality education delivery within these institutions. This management includes aspects such as strategic planning, resource allocation, staff development, and community engagement, all aimed at optimizing the educational experiences for students (Bush, 2020). Effective management is essential in private secondary schools, as these institutions often face unique challenges, such as competition for enrolment, funding limitations, and the need for high academic standards. Empirical studies have demonstrated that effective school management is positively correlated with student achievement, staff satisfaction, and overall school performance (Ogunyemi & Olajide, 2019) Principals who adopt appropriate leadership styles that align with their management practices

Can create a dynamic and responsive educational environment that meets the needs of students and the community.

Efficacy of Principal's Democratic Leadership Style and Management of Private Secondary Schools

The democratic leadership style emphasizes participative management, where principals foster collaboration by involving teachers, students, and other stakeholders in decision-making processes. In the context of Nigerian private secondary schools, this leadership approach has been shown to significantly enhance job satisfaction, as educators feel that their voices are valued and integral to the institution's growth (Adeyemi & Adu 2012). In secondary schools, democratic leadership aligns well with the collaborative nature of teaching, allowing principals to create an inclusive environment that promotes collective problem-solving and innovation. By encouraging teachers to contribute ideas, democratic principles can effectively address school challenges and improve instructional practices (Oguche, 2023). On the other hand, democratic leadership



improves teacher retention by creating a positive work environment. When teachers are involved in shaping the school's goals, they develop a stronger sense of loyalty and commitment, reducing turnover rates (Ojo, 2020).

Furthermore, democratic leadership fosters the development of professional learning communities, where teachers can collaborate, support one another, and continuously improve their skills, ultimately enhancing student outcomes (Ogunyemi & Olajide, 2020). This is particularly important in Nigerian private schools, where limited resources often require innovative approaches to teaching and school management. Democratic leadership also strengthens accountability within the school community. When principals involve staff in key decisions, it fosters a culture of responsibility, with each team member feeling accountable for achieving shared goals. This approach aligns with findings of Bush (2020) who states that democratic leadership creates a unified organizational vision, aligning individual and institutional objectives. In Nigerian private secondary schools, where the management structure often includes stakeholders with varied interests, democratic leadership can promote harmony and ensure a collective commitment to achieving the school mission and goals. (Oguche, 2023)

In private secondary schools in Nigeria, where resources are sometimes scarce, democratic leadership can enable creative, community-driven solutions, enhancing operational efficiency and boosting morale. However, this leadership style can present challenges, such as potential delays in decision-making due to the time required for consultation. Effective implementation of this style demands high emotional intelligence, patience, and excellent communication skills from principals to balance diverse viewpoints (Akinwale & George, 2020). Despite these challenges, democratic leadership remains valuable for creating a collaborative school culture where all voices are respected and valued. Studies such as those by Adeyemi & Adu (2020) confirm that democratic leadership, through its inclusive decision-making process, enhances teacher motivation and commitment, leading to a more collaborative school environment and improved job satisfaction. Therefore, the democratic leadership style, when effectively implemented, holds significant potential for transforming the management of private secondary schools in Nigeria, ultimately leading to improved school performance, teacher morale, and student outcomes.

Efficacy of Principal's Charismatic Leadership Style and Management of Private Secondary Schools

Charismatic leadership is centered on a principal's personal appeal, ability to inspire, and a clear vision for the school's future. Charismatic leaders effectively communicate a compelling vision, motivating staff and students through



enthusiasm and passion. This style is particularly impactful in schools facing challenges or undergoing change, as charismatic leaders can rally stakeholders around a unified mission and energize them to strive for excellence. In Nigeria private secondary schools, a charismatic principal can foster a sense of purpose and unity, promoting loyalty and morale among staff and students alike. Study Wang, Kim, & Lee, 2016) showed the influence of charismatic leadership on school culture and staff commitment. Charismatic leaders can inspire followers to exceed expectations, instilling a sense of pride and dedication within the institution. In educational settings, charismatic leadership has been associated with secondary school teacher motivation and satisfaction, which contributes to a supportive environment for students (Al-Husseini, E Ibeltagi, & Dosa, 2019). This approach also aligns well with private schools' need to build a strong reputation, as a charismatic principal often becomes the school's defining figure, drawing in students and parents.

According to Ogunyemi and Olajide (2020) Nigerian secondary schools, know the importance of charismatic leadership in fostering teacher engagement, enhancing school culture, and ensuring academic success cannot be overemphasized. Charismatic leadership has also contributed to increased teacher engagement and loyalty in Nigerian secondary schools. Principals who are visionary and inspiring create a positive school culture that motivates staff and aligns them with school goals. This type of leadership is particularly effective in private secondary schools, where reputation and community involvement are key drivers of success.

Despite its advantages, (Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017) listed some disadvantages of charismatic leadership in secondary schools to include the potential for dependency. When the school culture heavily revolves around a charismatic principal, there is a risk that staff may become overly reliant on the leader's presence and vision, creating sustainability challenges if the principal leaves or is unavailable. Moreover, charismatic leadership can sometimes discourage critical feedback, as followers may feel hesitant to question or challenge the principal's ideas, which could limit collaborative development (Rowold & Rohmann, 2020). Balancing charismatic leadership with team-oriented practices can mitigate some of these drawbacks. Recent studies suggest that when charismatic leaders also incorporate democratic practices, they can foster a culture of inclusivity and long-term growth. This approach helps to balance the principal's inspiring presence with the development of a resilient, independent school culture (Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016). Additionally, research by Nigerian by Adedeji (2020), suggests that charismatic leadership, when coupled with participative decision-making, can create a more sustainable and empowering environment for both staff and students.



Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 1716 teachers in private secondary schools in Makurdi metropolis (Field Survey, 2024). Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 176 respondents representing 10% of the total population as sample size for the study. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire titled “Efficacy of Principal's Leadership Styles and Management of Private Secondary Schools Questionnaire (EPLSMPSSQ) the instrument was designed by the researcher for the purpose of collecting data for this work. The PLSMPSSQ consists of 10 items from the two research questions and was validated by three experts, two from education foundation and one from educational measurement and evaluation. The reliability coefficient of 0.78 shows that the items are reliable. The instrument was structured according to the Likert format of Strongly Agree (SA)-4, Agree-(A)-3, Disagree (D)-2 and Strongly Disagree (SD)-1. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule is that any item that weighed below 2.50 is regarded as not significant.

Results

Research Question One: What is the efficacy of principal’s democratic leadership style on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis?

Table 1:

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of the Efficacy of Principal’s Democratic Leadership Style and Management of Private Secondary Schools in Makurdi Metropolis

s/n	Item Description (N= 172)	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	S.D	Decision
1	Principal’s democratic leadership encourages teachers to actively participate in decision-making.	74	8	58	38	2.69	1.24	Accepted
2	Democratic leadership by the principal helps resolve conflicts more effectively within the school.	46	8	74	44	2.53	1.13	Accepted
3	The principal’s openness to staff input leads to better administrative practices.	42	89	27	14	2.92	0.85	Accepted



4	The principal's democratic approach improves communication and transparency among school staff.	70	70	14	18	2.53	0.79	Accepted
5	A democratic leadership style by the principal positively impacts student and teacher satisfaction	81	78	13	-	2.59	1.45	Accepted
	Clusters					2.65	1.09	Accepted

Table 1 shows mean and standard deviation scores of the efficacy of principal's democratic leadership style and management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. The mean result value 2.69, 2.53, 2.92, 2.53, 2.59 and a cluster of 2.65 above criterion level of 2.50 with corresponding standard deviation scores of 1.24, 1.13, 0.85, 0.79, 1.45 and cluster of 1.09. Item interpretation indicates that, principal's democratic leadership lead to positive management of private schools. It encourages teachers to actively participate in decision-making, helps to resolve conflicts more effectively, open to more inputs, improves communication and transparency as well impacts students and teachers satisfaction.

Research Question Two: How does principal's charismatic leadership style influence management of private secondary schools?

Table 2:

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of the Principal's Charismatic Leadership Style and Management of Private Secondary Schools in Makurdi Metropolis

s/n	Item Description (N= 172)	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	S.D	Decision
6	The principal's charismatic personality makes staff more enthusiastic about their work	48	56	42	26	2.55	1.05	Accepted
7	Charismatic leadership by the principal motivates staff to go beyond their regular duties	43	68	6	55	2.60	1.19	Accepted



8	The principal's charisma fosters a positive school culture that enhances teamwork.	60	85	27	-	2.71	0.13	Accepted
9	Teachers feel more confident and supported when working under a charismatic principal.	61	53	22	36	2.56	0.17	Accepted
10	The principal's charismatic leadership style encourages a strong sense of loyalty and unity in staff.	105	24	-	43	3.04	1.30	Accepted
Clusters						2.69	0.77	Accepted

Table 2 shows mean and standard deviation scores of the principal's charismatic leadership style and management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. The mean result of item 6-10 value 2.55, 2.60, 2.71, 2.56, 3.04 and a cluster of 2.69 above criterion level of 2.50 with corresponding standard deviation scores of 1.05, 1.19, 0.13, 0.17, 1.30 and cluster of 0.77. Item by item interpretation explains that the private secondary schools principal's charismatic personality makes staff more enthusiastic about their work, motivates staff to go beyond their regular duties, fosters a positive school culture that enhances teamwork, teachers on their parts feel more confident and supported when working under a charismatic principal and the principal's charismatic leadership style encourages a strong sense of loyalty and unity in staff.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant efficacy of principal's democratic leadership styles on management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.

Table 3:

Chi-Square Analysis of the Efficacy of Principal's Democratic Leadership Styles and Management of Private Secondary Schools in Makurdi Metropolis

Responses	Fo	Fe	P	df	x ² Cal.	Remark
SA	46	43.0	0.000	3	51.070 ^a	Sign.
A	74	43.0				
D	8	43.0				
SD	44	43.0				
Total	172					

Table 3 shows chi-square analysis of efficacy of principal's democratic leadership styles and management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. From



the table above $\chi^2(3, N = 172) = 51.070^a$, $0.05 > p = 0.000$. The result showed the null hypothesis was rejected.

The result concludes that there was a significant efficacy of principal's democratic leadership styles on management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.

Hypothesis Two: Principal's charismatic leadership style does not significantly influence on the management of private secondary schools.

Table 4:

Chi-Square Analysis of the Principal's Charismatic Leadership Styles and Management of Private Secondary Schools in Makurdi Metropolis

Responses	Fo	Fe	P	df	χ^2 Cal.	Remark
SA	43	43.0				
A	68	43.0	0.000	3	49.721 ^a	Sign.
D	55	43.0				
SD	6	43.0				
Total	172					

Table 4 shows chi-square analysis of principal's charismatic leadership styles and management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. From the table above $\chi^2(3, N = 172) = 49.721^a$, $0.05 > p = 0.000$. The result showed the null hypothesis was rejected. The result concludes that there was significant efficacy of principal's charismatic leadership styles on management of private secondary schools.

Discussion

The findings of the study showed that principal's democratic leadership styles on management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. The research of Akinwale and George (2020) agreed with the discovering, democratic leadership, through its inclusive decision-making process, enhances teacher motivation and commitment, leading to a more collaborative school environment and improved job satisfaction.

The study also revealed that, there was significant efficacy of principal's charismatic leadership styles on management of private secondary schools. This finding align with Ogunyemi and Olajide (2019) who found that charismatic leadership was shown to increase teacher engagement and loyalty, as principals who are visionary and inspiring create a positive school culture that motivates staff and aligns them with school goals.



Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that both democratic and charismatic leadership styles employed by principals have a significant positive impact on the management of private secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. Principals who adopt a democratic leadership style, which emphasizes collaboration and shared decision-making, create an inclusive environment that fosters teacher involvement, enhances morale, and leads to more effective school management. Likewise, charismatic leadership, through the principal's ability to inspire and motivate, boosts teacher enthusiasm, builds loyalty, and strengthens commitment to the school's goals. These leadership styles, therefore, prove essential in fostering a productive and cohesive school environment that supports administrative efficiency and academic success.

Recommendations

The study recommended among others that:

1. Educational authorities and school boards provide training programs focused on democratic leadership for principals. This will enhance their skills in fostering participatory decision-making, communication, and team-building, which are essential for effective school management.
2. Training sessions should also include modules on charismatic leadership to help principals develop their ability to inspire and motivate staff. This will enhance the school culture, strengthen teacher loyalty, and improve overall school performance.

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