

Leadership Qualities and Styles for Successful Project Management in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigerians have been employing works of numerous project managers with different leadership styles that have led to either the success or failure of projects. The purpose of this study is to examine various leadership styles shown by the numerous project managers using a number of variables as a deciding factor to the success or failure of the project. For this study, a number of questionnaires were used to analyse the leadership styles of a selected number of people with regards to numerous factors. The end results displayed that the most important factors were 'personal character' 'leadership style' and 'communication skills'.

Keywords: leadership style, communication, project management

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1.1 Introduction

Managing projects has been a long time accomplishment since ancient times up to modern times. Projects account for half of the work carried out in an organisation and is therefore the main catalyst for organisational growth. Effective project management involves all the processes of project management and it integrates these processes through project life cycles to actualize a plan (Mereditth & Mantel, 2000).

The project manager is among the main people in the part of any project. The effectiveness of leadership style is the way finances are managed, the overall quality of the project acts as a liaison with the success of any project undertaken. It has been observed that leadership qualities are among the main pivot points used in developing the main systems in any project. So naturally, since effective leadership is among the main pivot point of a successful leadership, it is only sensible to select a qualified project manager to lead the project. The development of successful leadership qualities is synonymous with development of different sets of skills. The significance of this study is to show the relationship between successful management skills and leadership qualities owned by a project manager to lead to the success of a project undertaken.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Among various research conducted, challenges that arise in any project are mainly associated with project managers leadership style. Some of the challenges have to do with attaining competitive advantage, increasing stakeholder value, and so on. In most of these projects the project owners have the burdened with the hectic challenge of searching for people with the appropriate skills to lead their projects. Failure to select project management leaders with the suitable set of skills and experience suited to that project leads to things like project failure as in the case of numerous projects undertaken here in Nigeria. Examples of such failures range from popular projects like the Abuja national stadium, which has been seen to be used for activities other than its true purpose, the recent failure of Nigerian airways and ranges to unpopular project failures such as the collapse of storey buildings at Adazi-Ani, which left a person killed and over 200 people injured (Nagarajan K. (2012).

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study sought to meet the following objectives

- i. To provide ways to reduce and prevent factors leading to project failure.
- ii. To identify the factors that lead to project failure in relation with leadership qualities.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

H₁: There is no correlation between leadership qualities and executive background

H₂: There is uniformity among variant executive groups in leadership style.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Successful Project Management

Project management is the "total planning, control, collaboration from the beginning to the ending phase which seeks to fulfil a client's requirement and making sure the project has been completed within a given amount of

time on a given cost meeting suitable quality and standard.” Project Management Institute defines project management as the application of knowledge, skills and tools to project activities to meet shareholders demand. In past times, any establishment’s activities tend to be project based. (Peter, 2001)

Effective management of such projects is necessary if the establishment is looking to succeed. has stated that “factors such as key result areas and critical success factors give hints to know whether the organisation is likely to successfully move its resources in the events of conflicting sub goals, politics and constraints” (Lianying, 2013)

Cleland (1986) stated that “ the success of any project comes to fruition only if the degree to which the projects performance was obtained within a given period of time and cost, and the impact of the project on the mission of that organization”. Leadership is among the most important aspect of any project, along with effective communication from the project managers and the co-operation among the project team mates. PMI (2005) have gone through the sub components of projects to be recognised by the following definitions.

- i. Projects tend to be complicated one-time processes. Projects aim to meet ends and objectives. They are complicated because they require the contribution of different members of the establishment or outside organizations, in the case of outsourcing. Since a project is a temporary endeavour, it exists till all the objectives have been fulfilled and afterwards, it dissolves.
- ii. Projects are based on shareholder demands. Projects are successful if they meet shareholder demands. So therefore, the project manager has to put all of these factors into consideration if they were to succeed in the project.

Atkinson (1999) stated that timing, quality and cost are the main factors of any project. Things that can make the project better is the addition of the acceptance of the client to the project prototype and success in the business. Although, project has numerous definitions, it must be known that project differs from other activities in the organisation.

3. Methodology

This research therefore covers one selected organisation in Abuja, Abuja Electricity Distributed Company AEDC. Secondary data were obtained through books, journals, and internet. Empirical works of other scholars were consulted. A simple size of 133 was obtained from the population of 200 at 5% error tolerance and 95% degree of freedom using Yamane’s statistical formula 133(100%) of the questionnaires distributed 110(83%) were returned and 23(17%) were not returned. The questionnaire was designed in Likert scale format. The researchers conducted a pre-test on the questionnaire to ensure the validity of the instrument. Pearson moment product coefficient and regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses.

3.1 Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses One

H₁: There is correlation between leadership qualities and executive background.

H₀ There is no correlation between leadership qualities and executive background

Table I: Table of correlation between leadership quality and executive background

Correlations

		Leadership quality	Executive background.
Leadership quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.536 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.110	.000
	N	110	110
Executive background	Pearson Correlation	.536 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.110
	N	110	110

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to above calculations it is observed that amount of correlation coefficient between leadership qualities is equal to 53.6 per cent and considering that a significant level is less than 5%. Then we can say that there is a positive relationship between leadership quality and executive background. This implies that one per cent increase in executive background will lead to 53.6% increase in level of leadership quality.

Regression analysis test of level of leadership quality and executive background

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.965 ^a	.716	.586	3.79952

a. Predictors: (Constant), leadership quality

Regression coefficient of R = .965 or 96.5% indicate that relationship exist between independent variables and dependent variable. The coefficient of determination R² = 0.716 which show that 71.6% of variation in level of executive background explained by effective leadership background. The development adjusted R-square in the

table shows that the dependent variable, (level executive background) is affected by 58.6% by independent variable (effective leadership background). It shows that effective leadership quality is responsible for executive background.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	12.310	.901		13.656	.002
Leadership quality	1.056	.085	.536	12.426	.000

a. Dependent Variable: level leadership quality

The coefficient of determination for effective leadership quality is positive (1.056) and is highly significant (0.001) in ensuring level of management. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the t-statistic value of 12.426 and the standard error value of 0.085. This implies that a unit increase in effective infrastructure failure will lead to 1.056 increases in level of performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted that there is a relationship between the leadership quality and executive background.

Hypothesis two

H₂ There is uniformity among variant executive groups in leadership style.

H₀: There is no uniformity among variant executive groups in leadership style.

Table II: Table of correlation between variant executive and leadership style

Correlations

		Variant executive	Leadership style
Variant executive	Pearson Correlation	1	.473**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.110	.000
	N	110	110
Leadership style	Pearson Correlation	.473 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.110
	N	110	110

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to above calculations is observed that amount of correlation coefficient between variant executive and leadership style is equal to 47.3 per cent and considering that a significant level is less than 5%. Then we can say that there is a positive relationship between variant executive and leadership style. This implies that one per cent increase in variant executive will lead to 47.3% increase in leadership style.

Regression analysis test of variant executive and leadership style

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.773 ^a	.624	.722	3.96426

a. Predictors: (Constant), leadership style

Regression coefficient of R = .773 or 77.3% indicate that relationship exist between independent variables and dependent variable. The coefficient of determination R² = 0.624 which show that 62.4% of variation in improving the employee productivity is explained by appraisal performance. The adjusted R-square in the table shows that the dependent variable, (improving the leadership style) is affected by 72.2% by independent variable (variant executive). It shows that there dare positive managements on improving the leadership style.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1(Constant)	15.036	.806		18.644	.000
Leadership style	1.319	.125	.473	10.520	.000

a. Dependent Variable: improving the leadership style.

The coefficient of determination for performance appraisal is positive (1.319) and is highly significant (0.000) in improving the employee productivity. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the t-statistic value of 10.520 and the standard error value of 0.125. This implies that a unit increase in performance appraisal will lead to 1.319 increases in improving employee productivity. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis that there are positive impacts of performance appraisal on improving the employee productivity

3.2 Discussion of Findings

The researchers conducted a pre-test on the questionnaire to ensure the validity of the instrument. Pearson moment product co-efficient and regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses. The table below shows that economists exhibit mostly autocratic leadership style, engineers exhibit consensus style, computer scientists mostly exhibit consultative autocratic and all the accountants exhibit shareholder style leadership. So basically, from the management instrument all of the respondents have their D and I percentile fall into their respective leadership style therefore, 35% are autocratic, 30% are consensus, 20% are consultative autocrat and the rest are shareholder style leadership.

4. Conclusion

- i. Based on the findings in the course of this study, the following conclusions were reached. Organisations tend to perform more efficiently and effectively when they are at harmony with their leaders.
- ii. In view of (1) above, the conclusion is that leadership truly has a positive effect on the performance of workers.
- iii. Organisations prefer the democratic leadership style to other styles of leadership.

In view of (3) above and for the attainment of peace and harmony in organization I strongly agree that democratic leadership style should be encouraged

5. Recommendations

It is highly recommended, according to the management instrument, that different leadership qualities and style should be matched for the most suitable kind of projects they belong to, to promote project success.

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