# Leadership Styles: A Vital Force for the Management of Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education for National Development

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**Abstract**
*Vocational education has a great impact on entrepreneurship as vocational education is expected to emphasis the teaching of entrepreneurial skills and ways of thinking to prepare employees and would-be entrepreneurs. This paper examined the different leadership styles and draw out their implications for the dispensation of vocational entrepreneurship education in Nigeria for national development. Vocational entrepreneurship education has not been fully recognized in the country over the years and in effect it has been difficult to have adequate number of leaders in the few vocational institutions in the country. The success of vocational and entrepreneurship education is largely dependent on the quality of its leadership. It is regrettable to see that vocational and entrepreneurship education is fraught with problems which militate against its ability to produce adequate number and quality of skilled manpower required in our country. The paper identified shortage of funds and materials, staff is grossly inadequate and unqualified, problems of secret societies and drug addiction among students', poor implementation of entrepreneurship curriculum, poor supervision and inspection of programme in Nigeria schools, the way leadership of schools literally reacts to and manage schools' crises and the management and administration of vocational and entrepreneurship education to mention but a few out of its inherent problems. The paper suggested that the top and lower management cadres must be committed to work for the realization of the objectives of vocational and entrepreneurship studies at all levels. Also, it is necessary for the leadership to develop their own management skills and learn to adapt the right leadership style in order to win the cooperation of difficult individuals.*
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## Introduction

Vocational and entrepreneurship education study calls for good and industrious leaders. The position of a good leader is unique because not all who desire it can get it. Anyone who has the experience of presiding over a meeting, organising a group effort, or observing a political figure in action has developed some sense of what leadership is about, and that sense is a mental picture of factors constituting effective or ineffective leadership. Leadership plays a very vital role in creating an excited atmosphere and culture in an organization (Alghazo & Al-Anazi, cited in Basit, Sebastian, & Hassan, 2017). The work of a school leader goes beyond preparation of annual budgets or monitoring school finance. As a professional, he has many teachers to cope with. Actual classroom teaching, the conduct of examinations, the assessment of students' performance and the appraisal of their development will throw more challenges. The diversity of vocational and entrepreneurship education curriculum will require the services of subject specialists. Therefore, the leader can thus be seen as a planner as well as an executor or administrator

Achieving objectives on schedule and within budget could be crucial to the success of any organisation in general and entrepreneurship in particular**.** The ability to lead difficult individuals out of unproductive situations to improved performance and better working relationships is an essential leadership asset. Leadership style is really just an aggregation of virtues, traits, skills, and behaviours (Wart, 2003). The word "virtue" as defined by the Oxford Advanced learner's dictionary (2001) refers to behaviour or attitudes that show high moral standards; a particular good quality or habit. Leadership virtue intends one's ability to utilize his resources both human and material to achieve the desired objectives. Leadership virtue is when there is a sense of togetherness and oneness of purpose in ones operations. It is the ability to drive capital and people along together to achieve a particular

purpose as well as enables the realization of values and is fulfilled through different value forms that can promote reform, including independence, integrity, equity, benevolence, kindness, justice, loyalty, generosity, passion, and modesty (Hackett & Wang, in Whang, 2021).

The present situation in Nigeria needs a vibrant leader who can place more emphasis on vocational and entrepreneurship education. Some aspects of entrepreneurship education are introduced into vocational education and training system where entrepreneurship is made as the guiding principle for vocational education (Abdullah, 2020). Vocational education, according to Atakpa (2004), is a programme designed for preparing individual for gainful employment through the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Entrepreneurship on the other hand is a creative and innovative response to the environment in any area of human endeavour such as Business, Industry, Agriculture, Education, Social Work and Services of all types (Olawale cited in Ayeni & Adesua, 2010). The objective of vocational and entrepreneurship education is to equip students with sufficient knowledge and skills to enter labour market including self-employment once they leave school (UNEVOC, 2010 cited in Abdullah, 2020). According to Udo and Bako (2014) Vocational Entrepreneurs Education (VEE) is defined as that education that provides skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes necessary for effective employment in specific business occupations. It may be defined as the teaching of procedural skills to facilitate the completion of activities as a method of assisting participants or learners to engage in jobs requiring manual or practical talents. Ndikanwu and Aninye cited by Adekanmbi and Ogunleye (2016) described entrepreneurship as "the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coupling these with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, and other resources to meet an identified need and create wealth. Similarly, Fayigbe and Ogunleye (2021) opined that entrepreneurial education provide an avenue for graduates to contribute to the economy by creating new enterprises and new economic sectors that will generate jobs for them and others to end the myriad of problems and realities of unemployment in Nigeria. It is another means to inculcate self-employment entrepreneurship culture in students. Also, Adeosun, Lawal and Ogunleye (2021) affirmed that entrepreneurship plays an important role in an uncertain environment like Nigeria because it helps to develop the insights needed to discover and create opportunities for entrepreneurs to gain the ability to successfully start and manage their businesses which would enable them to contribute positively to the national development.

Despite the role of vocational and entrepreneurship education, it is observed that, up till now there is managerial problem. The management problems of vocational education (Entrepreneurships) in Nigeria have a historical background and are as old as the advent of formal Western type of education in Nigeria (Osuala 1987). There is absolute discrimination, negligence and bias against vocational education by the society. This is traceable to the misconception about vocational education. The society saw it as education for the handicapped, low in intelligence, drop outs, delinquents and the poor. As a result of the confusion and misconception about all that entrepreneurship stands for, it has not been given clearly defined place in the educational system of Nigeria. Where any recognition in terms of policy has been given to vocational education, like the establishment of the 6-3-3-4 system of education and technical schools, these are not organized and managed by competent entrepreneurship educators. In some schools in Nigeria, entrepreneurship education seems to be managed and controlled those who know little or-nothing about vocational education. Although, this trend seems to have changed in the recent time, yet this may not serve the best interest of vocational education because "vocational education" will be effective in proportion as the lecture has acquired successful experience in the application of skills and knowledge to the operations and processes he undertaken to teach (Prosser's theory 1949).

The implication of the above statement is that a leader cannot lead that which he does not know, and since the subject matter for a vocational lecturer is composed of the skills and knowledge of the occupation, it would follow that lecturers who are recognized as highly competent workers themselves through actual successful employment experience would be most desirable for a vocational programme. Therefore, changes in the world must provide Nigeria with great opportunity to develop her educational system toward the challenges of this century. The advancement of technology development of Nigeria depends on the available of vocational and technical know-how of her citizens who can use their ability, intelligence and talents.

To actualizes the objective of vocational and entrepreneurship studies in Nigeria, leaders must strive to maintain and improve its standard. Emerging issues in the management of vocational and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria today include shortage of funds and materials; staff is grossly inadequate and unqualified, problems of secret societies and drug addiction among students. The leadership of schools literally reacts to and manages schools' crises. Also, poor implementation of entrepreneurship curriculum, poor supervision and inspection of programme in Nigeria schools, inadequate facilities for teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education

(Adeosun, Lawal & Ogunleye, 2021). All these call for exemplary decisiveness, courage, intelligence resilience and high flex in the choice and use of leadership style.

## Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper on the basis of the foregoing explanation are therefore;

1. to highlight the standard expected in the administration of vocational and entrepreneurship education,
2. to examine the different styles and theories of leadership, and
3. to draw out the implications of (ii) above for the dispensation of Vocational and entrepreneurship Education.

## Meaning and Description of a Leader

The Encyclopedia Americana (2006) opined that virtually all societies have some standards of ethical conduct, (a people's way of life and vocation) whether or not they subject them to scrutiny. It further states that charisma is the quality or personality that sets an individual apart from ordinary men so that he is recognized as having other worldly or at least uniquely exceptional powers and qualities. Charismatic qualities may be found in the leaders of such varied groups of priests, politicians, artists and socialites. Charisma means emotional expression, self-esteem, confidence, determination, internal stability, intellectual stimulation, passion and commitment to his own vision. Charismatic leaders know who they are and what they believe in and have the power to convey confidence in their own vision to the follower as well as create an atmosphere of change and articulate an idealized vision of a better future (Nikoloski, 2015).

It is a known fact that efficiency depends on good leadership, a number of scholars of management have defined it in different ways. Leadership is the process of influencing others to work willingly towards an organisation's goals, and to the best of their capabilities (Mayo, 1989). Leadership can be seen as a behaviour; a style; a skill; a process; a responsibility; an experience; a function of management; a position of authority; an influencing relationship; a characteristic; and an ability (Northouse cited in Wajdi, 2017). According to Kotter (1990), it is defined as the capacity for collective action to the organization work. He believed that leadership focus on motivation and inspiration.

The essence of leadership is followership. In other words it is the willingness of people to follow that makes a person a leader. Leadership is also one of the functions of management, perhaps as directing, instructing or commanding. Ajayi (1992) quoting Likert (1967) observed that 'managing the human component is the central and the most important task, because all else depends on how well it is done. Leaders, in general, are seen as superior people who make lives better for the followers (Budur, 2018). In fact, true leadership is way less complicated to understand, and true leaders exist among almost every small group of people. The leadership quality comes naturally to some people, or we can say they are born leader; while others gain and develop it through hard work and making themselves active and visible (Budur & Demir, 2019a; Rashid Salih, & Budur, 2020). Exercising leadership requires extensive knowledge and self-improvement on the part of the leader as it is not an easy job to carry the weight of an entire firm, or organization all alone (Poturak, Mekić, Hadžiahmetović, & Budur, 2020).

Ibukun (2004) defined management as a process of dominating an organisation into structural levels and arranging workers and activities into performance units and coordinating resources and production procedure through appropriate leader behaviours to achieve organisational goals. If a leader had indifferent or poor leadership 'qualities' or skills his subordinates would still do their job, but they would do it ineffective or perhaps in a confused manner. A good leader should be able to use the capabilities of subordinates to better effect. According to (Mayo 1989), leadership comes about in a number of different ways: a manager is appointed to a position of authority within the organization; some leaders (e.g. in politics or in trade unions) might be elected; and other leaders might emerge by popular choice and through their personal drive and qualities Unofficial spokesmen for groups of people are leaders of this style.

The concern of this paper is with leaders who are appointed by virtue of their qualifications such as education, wealth of experience, diligence, skills and competencies in the areas of vocational and entrepreneurship education. There is no gainsaying that at every level of the education system, there is the need for a force with legitimate authority to direct, guide and regulate the actions of both the teaching and non-teaching personnel, who in turn make use of the physical, material and financial resources, so that the educational goals can be accomplished. It is this driving force that is referred to as the leader. The headmaster, principal, provost, rector, and the vice-chancellor occupies leadership positions at the primary secondary, colleges of education,

polytechnic and university education levels respectively, success or failure to accomplish depends on the effectiveness of the leader.

If vocational and entrepreneurship education is managed by effective leaders, it would help to achieve the objectives of National development. The general objectives of development are:
- ✓ To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods such as food shelter, health, and protection.
- ✓ To raise the levels of living including in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better jobs, and greater attention to cultural and human values. These will enhance materials well-being and self esteem.
- ✓ To expand the range of economic and social choices available to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence in relation to other people and nations and the forces of ignorance and human misery (Muo, 2006)

It is believed that the success of the nation's economy depends on the quality of its workers. One way of remedying the imbalance between education and unemployment is to direct educational efforts towards developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes conducive to self employment. Investments in formal vocational and entrepreneurship education yield a profit both to the individual and the society as a whole and that investment in human capital not only increases individual's productivity, but also lays the technical base of the type of labour force necessary for rapid economic growth.

**Standards in Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education**

The national content standard for Entrepreneurship Education equip youths and adults with functional knowledge and skills that can prepare them to succeed in an entrepreneurial economy and accelerating entrepreneurship everywhere (European Union cited in Gautam & Singh, 2015). Entrepreneurs have a vision for doing things in a better way, thinking beyond the constraints of current rules and resources. Perhaps more importantly, they have the passion and urgency that literally compell them to take risk necessary to realize their vision .They want to look deeper in the world and by doing so, they inspire their fellow men and women. Therefore, entrepreneurship is not just a venture creation process; its essence goes beyond contemporary times with maturity and serves as an agent of change (Gautam & Singh, 2015).

Certain authorities have addressed the question of standards in vocational education. Prosser (1949) developed sixteen theorems as a basis for sound and successful vocational education programme. He noted that if serious effort is made to meet these goals, the result would, in almost every instance, be sound quality vocational education. For a leader to be effective in the dispensation of this programme, the following principles, among others, must be maintained. Vocational education will be efficient when:

- ✓ the environment in which the training is prepared resembles the environment he must eventually work;
- ✓ the training is carried on in the same way, same operation, using the same tools and machines as in the occupation itself;
- ✓ the individual is trained directly and specifically in the thinking and manipulative habits required in the occupation itself;
- ✓ it permits each trainee to develop his interest, aptitude and intelligence to the highest possible degree;
- ✓ it is designed for people who need it, want it, and can profit from it.
- ✓ the instructor has successful experience in the application of skills and knowledge to the operations and processes he undertakes to teach;
- ✓ its methods of instruction and its personal relations with learners takes into consideration the particular characteristics of any particular grout: which it serves;
- ✓ The administration is elastic and fluid rather than rigid and standardized; and
- ✓ The level of preparation is such that it enables the trainees to obtain and retain employment in business occupation.

Prosser (1949) concluded by saying "any attempt to disregard anyone of these basic and fundamental principles, can only result to undermining and destroying the programme for the citizens of the community". It is important for the leadership of Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education to know that preparation for employment is generally costlier than general education. This additional cost is usually dependent upon the space, equipment, materials and the necessity for smaller class size. So also, Entrepreneurship education will most likely strengthen if dedicated funding is allocated and especially so if the funding is long-term as opposed to more short term or project-based funding (Abdullah, 2020). Vocational and Entrepreneurial activity are unquestionably considered

engines of economic growth and innovation. As such, they are among the ultimate determinants of economic performance and development (Ayeni & Adesua,2010).

**Leadership Styles in Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education**
Leadership in itself is not a problem, but the problem lies in the appropriate style to lead the organization (Wart, 2003). Management style could be transactional, in that the manager tells the subordinate what to do, and the subordinate does it. There are different types of leadership styles. Lewin's Leadership Style (1939) identified that there are three different leadership styles; democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire (Billig cited in Basit, Sebastian & Hassan (2017). These leadership styles according Mayo (1989) include:

**Bureaucratic leadership style: -** This type of leadership style is rule-centered. It believes in laid down rules and procedures. There is no deviation regardless of prevailing circumstances, from the laid down rules. The adherence to rules in most cases however punctuates the achievement of goals.

**Autocratic: -** This is self-centered. The leader believes in himself. He emphasises production at the expense of the workers. There are no consultations before decision concerning workers and, other things are taken. This may however reduced production or disturb the achievement of the set goals within the organization. An autocratic leader is bossy it approach. He commands, not instructs. In accordance to Khan, et al. (2015), autocratic leadership is where manager retains as much power and decision-making authorisation as possible. Autocratic leaders are high-handed leaders and are the centre of every activities that go on in the establishment and all authority emanated from them and ends with them (Melling & Little cited in Basit, Sebastian & Hassan, 2017).

**Democratic**: - This is group centered. It respects person's opinions within the group. Decisions are jointly taken, seeing of objectives and achievements of objectives are shared. However, if the emphasis is over stressed on human relations, the achievement of goals may be jeopardized. Democratic leaders actively encourage and stimulate group decisions and group discussions (White & Lippitt cited in Basit, Sebastian & Hassan, 2017).

**Laissez-Faire: -** According to Basit, Sebastian and Hassan, (2017), laissez faire leaders avoid making decisions, the provision of rewards and the provision of positive/negative feedback to subordinates. These have an "I don't care" stand within the organisation. Anything any body does, so long as it satisfies that individual, is acceptable to him. The leader lacks independent decision, which results in low job performance. Everybody in the organisation is a leader. This leadership style stands the risk of causing chaos in the organisation. Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (2007) regard laissez-faire leadership as a form of destructive leadership. Einarsen et al (2007) argued that laissez-faire leadership violates the legitimate interests of the organizations and their employees by undermining organizational objectives and /or subordinates well-being.

**Implication of Leadership Styles in Managing Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education**
The four styles are recognizable in the management of vocational and entrepreneurship education. They are also likely to have different effects on efficiency and morale. Leadership in vocational and entrepreneurship education will require a particular style or a combination of two or more of the styles depending on the nature of the decision to be taken, the leadership qualities, the context of operation and the characteristics of the team members. This was corroborated by Wart, (2003) when he says that leadership in the public sector does not rely on just one style, but a combination of leadership styles. There is no doubt that the type of leadership roles adopted by a leader will invariably affect the efficiency of vocational and entrepreneurship education. It is noteworthy that a leader's style affects his subordinate's level of satisfaction, motivation and performance. Prayogi and Lesmana (2019) find out that simultaneously variable style of Leadership and Motivation has positive and significant effect on the performance of employees. No matter the qualification of the teachers, and no matter how adequate the instructional materials are, the leadership style of the leader will definitely have effect on the performance and attainment of educational goal for national development.

For the autocratic leader, decision - making is centralised in the hands of the leader himself. He does not encourage participation by subordinates; indeed, subordinate's ideas might be actively discouraged and obedience to orders would be expected from them. Adejobi (2004) reported that Edem (1990) observed that the authoritarian style reduces worker's satisfaction and productivity. He further observed that the productivity of the workers who were allowed reasonably informal supervision showed an increase over those who worked under strict and closer surveillance. The laizzes-faire is a style of leadership that makes it difficult for the organisation to accomplish its goals and objectives. Subordinates are given little or no direction at all, and are allowed to

establish their own objectives and make decisions. A leader can use this style to an advantage in the area of research and publication, giving individual research worker freedom of choice to orgnaise and conduct their research as they themselves want (within certain limits, such as time and page limits). In the democratic style, decision making is decentralized and shared by subordinates in participative group action. To be truly democratic, the subordinate must be willing to participate. In democratic environment, people, like their leaders are friendlier towards one another, and also their objectives are achieved with comparison to other styles like autocratic and laizzes-faire. Laissez-faire leadership style is associated with unproductiveness, ineffectiveness and dissatisfaction (Deluga cited in Basit, Sebastian & Hassan, 2017From the foregoing, there are differing views as to which of these leadership styles-is likely to be more effective. Mayo (1989) opined that the degree of effectiveness of a particular leadership style will depend on the work environment, the leaders himself, and his subordinates. Also Adejobi (2004) quoting Bray *et al* (1986) believed that a good and effective leader should imbibe all the styles of leadership in order to perfect her administration.

For effectiveness, a good leader must select and utilize any of the styles that will promote co-operation among him and his workers. Another thing that can aid leadership effectiveness is empathy which explains one's ability to place oneself in another's shores and become aware of how he or she thinks and feels. This is a quality on which people differ greatly depending upon early life experiences. Adejobi (2004) quoting Marianhill (1956) emphasised that the leader should always keep his staff in touch with the work of the school as a whole and that he should not attempt to deprive his staff of their own benefits. In his own contribution, Moi (2002) observed that a leader should be prepared to adapt his leadership style with someone he finds difficult because the style he finds comfortable will not work in all situations". He further advised that "avoid telling someone how to do things-instead say what needs to be achieved and why, letting him or her work out how to reach the goal."

An effective and efficient leader in vocational education is expected to cater for the development, goal achievement and for the maintenance of the team. Team maintenance relates to interpersonal relationships between the leader and the team and within the team itself. It includes conflict resolution among members of the team, encouraging them, listening to voices of the minority and stimulating cooperation among the participants. Leadership in vocational education requires ability to induce analysis, to help make needed distractions, to protect feelings, to develop teamwork, to operate as a reorganizer and systematizer of ideas and proposals and to ensure that teamwork is a true meshing of ideas, approaches, insights, and skills.

Vocational entrepreneurship education leaders should develop high style flax. They cannot afford to be rigid in their management styles particularly with the backdrop that the style of management should be related to the situation. Thus as elements of the situation change, the leader should be able to read and interpret the local situational barometer and make necessary style adjustment. A bad leadership style will produce poor result while a good and acceptable leadership behaviour will yield great positive productivity.

The administrator that motivates employees will create conductive and attractive work environment and encourage self-direction. Such a leader will involve workers in decision making, respect their personal work and expose them to change and innovations. Besides, he will provide more opportunities for leadership on a particular task to emerge from staff rather than considering himself to be the only source of initiation. Vocational and entrepreneurship education leaders should provide good leadership and motivation for staff as well as scope for self-direction, independence and self-reliance when duties are assigned. This will provide opportunity for staff to change methods and bring in innovations and contribute their best into the education system. It will encourage creativity among the staff and involvement of staff in planning and decision making. This will produce a fovourable results for the leader and vocational education programme as a whole.

**Conclusion**
Every human organization is set up to achieve some objectives. It is the attached of the objectives that makes an organization to be seen as successful. It has been the purpose of this paper to examine some aspects of leadership in the managing of vocational and entrepreneurship education using the available leadership styles as theoretical framework. The article has shown that leadership styles are of theoretical and practical relevance in the understanding of leadership in vocational education for national development. In order to improve the management of vocational and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, the leadership of education at all levels in general and vocational education in particular should be committed to their duties and adopt participating leadership style. This will bring about unity, peace, mutual and cordial interaction between all and sundry.

**Recommendations**
For vocational and entrepreneurship studies to be managed effectively, the following are hereby suggested.

- ✓ The top and lower management cadres must be committed to work for the realization of the objectives of vocational entrepreneurship studies at all level
- ✓ Training and retraining of vocational entrepreneurship educators will help to acquire up to date knowledge needed in this changing world of work
- ✓ Subordinates may become difficult if they feel that they are being poorly managed or are working without clear direction. It is therefore necessary for the leader to develop his own management skills and learn to adapt his leadership style in order to win cooperation from difficult individuals.
- ✓ The professional vocational manager should put service above self and accept the more scrupulous and transparently honest and ethical process of thought for all decisions in his daily work.

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