

# Teachers' Perception of Female Principal Leadership Role in Secondary Schools in Calabar Municipality Cross River State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This research was aimed at studying teacher's perception of female principal leadership role in secondary schools in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. Twenty schools were selected from a total of forty schools in Calabar Municipality using simple random sampling. Ten teachers were selected from each of the selected schools using systematic sampling technique. A total of two hundred (200) teachers were selected from a total of seven hundred and eighty 780 teachers. The result of the study showed that there was no difference in male and female teachers' perception of female principals' leadership style, decision-making, management of schools finances and administrative roles. It was recommended that the female principals should be encouraged since they impact more discipline in the school system.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Principal, leadership, leadership style, principal and perception

## 1. Introduction

Principals are the head of the secondary schools and therefore oversee the general program of the school. Today in Nigeria and indeed in Cross River State, there has been the outcry about the state of affairs in the secondary school system. There seem to be varied shades of perception on the roles of the chief executives of the school in the category under study. Such views point to the fact that the principals are not up-and-doing in their task performances while another opinion argued that this portion however runs the point and advances that the changing environment in the Nigerian secondary school gives principal's very much challenging tasks to accomplish. This task accomplishment has to a large extent influenced the perception of teacher under such educational system. The development of the total quality management in education has given the principal more serious challenges while in the past all they knew was based on the clinical supervision (National Policy of Education, 2004).

However, the introduction of the computers and information science has indeed made principals' task more demanding and many principals have been battling with ways of meeting their challenges. And these challenges took principals away from performing their task. The world dynamics suggest that this is how teachers' perception of principals changes with time, just as the world view of people changes. The principal is the administrative head as well as the head in charge of the day to day administration of academic activities in an education institution. He is responsible for the overall decision making in the institution which is very important and necessary for the effective performance of his administrative duties in order to be able to carry his teachers along. The principals perform a variety of functions. Today, the main tasks of the principals are interpreting policy, executing curriculum-programmes, seeing to students' welfare, equipment, physical facilities and finances, inducting, retraining staff and maintaining effective school/ community relations. They are also expected to draw heavily on human relation concepts, stressing on motion such as democratic procedures, teachers involvement, motivational techniques and sociometry of leadership, which make for a portine teacher perception. The principal must realize that he/she is an employee of the ministry of education or any other agency to which he/she owes loyalty, good quality work and integrity. The principal therefore has to maintain a strong working relationship with the ministry or its agencies such as the state schools management board etc.

The principal as a leader of the teaching staff must promote effective teaching in his/her school. He/she must be acquainted with modern techniques of instruction and also have the responsibility for assigning task and duties to staff. He/she should ensure thorough constant supervision that each person is performing his/her duties satisfactorily. For instance, he may have to inspect teachers' lesson notes to see whether teachers actually do prepare their lessons to evaluate their teaching. In order to encourage teachers to take on responsibility, the principal should delegate duties to them and by so doing, he would be involving them in the administration of the school.

If the school head is to achieve his/her goals of improving the curriculum programmes, he must have an understanding of the teacher and teachers' role, and he must always be prepared to work effectively with the teachers. He must strive to maintain discipline among teachers, but this must be done with fact and firmness. A

principal however, should know that the morale of the teacher is affected by both material and human factors. So a high degree of discipline may create good morale among staff. The principal should do all he/she can to help create and provide an ideal teaching climate in his school. The principal of the school should maintain good public relations with the patients and the community as a whole. The principal should endeavour to maintain close working relationship with other educational institutions. The principal is the manager of the school. He should therefore be able to provide organizational leadership in order to achieve effective management and administration.

The teachers see the principal as a leader rather than an administrator. That is to say that, the school head will be an innovator with regard to the goals of the school and seeing to it that the school is in good shape and form. As a leader the principal must be task-oriented and person-oriented that is to say as task-oriented he must be seeking to fulfill certain goals and as person oriented he must try to meet the personnel needs of members of his staff.

In teachers' perception, they accept the authority of the head of the school no matter how inadequately he/she fulfills his /her duties. The teacher will hold certain expectations of him which he/she has to fulfill in order to retain their support. The teacher needs the support of the principal in all circumstances even though they are at fault or the student, the principal needs to back them up in which ever situation that should have come their way.

This study was therefore aimed at studying teacher's perception of female principal leadership role in secondary schools in Cross River State Calabar, Nigeria

## 2. Methodology

**Research design** The Research design is a descriptive study. Phenomenon that has already taken place, the perception of teachers about their female leadership role in secondary schools constitutes the phenomenon that has taken place.

**Area of study:** This study was carried out in selected secondary schools in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State Calabar in the capital of Cross River State, which is situated in the Southern part of Nigeria. Calabar Municipality is owned by the Quas, Efiks and the Efuts. Calabar Municipality is between 04' 05' and 05' 15' North and longitude 08' 15' and 08' 25' East. It is bounded both in the North by the Cross River and the East by the Great Kwa River. To the south, it is washed by the Calabar River.

**Study population:** The study population included two hundred teachers from selected schools in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State.

**Sample:** In this study ten schools were selected and twenty teachers were further selected from each of these schools, making a total of two hundred teachers from five private schools and five public schools.

**Sampling techniques:** A sample of 200 teachers was drawn from a population of 800 teachers. Simple random sampling methods was used to select the different schools and systematic sampling method was further used to select 20 teachers from each of the schools. A list of teachers' disposition in each school was used as the sampling frame while the sample interval was calculated for each school using the sample size and the sample frame for each school. This rounded up to 200 teachers for the 20 schools.

**Instrumentation:** The teachers' perception of female principal roles questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was made-up of two sections, Section A and B. Section A requested for information from the teachers about their personal characteristics i.e. their biodata. Section B contained questions meant to elicit response on a four point scale of Strongly agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagreed (D) Strongly disagree (SD). The questionnaire was interviewer administered.

**Data collection:** The data for this study was collected by the researchers, after obtaining permission from the school authority. The researchers distributed the instrument to the selected secondary schools and collected them. This was to ensure a high return rate and avoided the problem usually associated with the posting of instrument and to offer explanation where and when necessary.

**Procedure for data analysis:** The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while the independent T-test analysis was used to test the hypothesis.

**Validity of the instrument:** The teachers' perception of female principal roles questionnaire was validated by experts in education administration and also experts in test and measurement. Their comments were used to revise the instruments.

**Reliability of the instrument:** The Teachers perception of female leadership role in secondary schools in Cross River State was pretested for reliability using test-retest method. The researchers administered a set of questionnaires on the respondents and after two weeks, another two weeks another set of questionnaire was re-administered on the same respondents.

The administration was correlated with the second after it had been adjusted by spearman from prophecy formula and not yielded a coefficient of 69. This was found to be big enough to make the instrument reliable.

### 3. Results

#### Hypothesis I

There is no significant difference between male and female teacher perception of female principals in their supervisory role

**Table 1**

Mean score, standard deviation and t-test of difference between male and female teacher's perception of female principals performance in supervisory role

Males	Females				
X	SD	X	SD	t-Value	P-Value
1.00	0.00	1.00	2.17	0.58	0.58
N = 200	df = 1.98 Alfa level = 0.05				

The result of the statistical test showed that, there is no significant difference between male and female teachers perception on female principal performance in supervisory roles.

The p-value of 0.58 is greater than 0.05 at 1.98 degree of freedom. The test is statistically not significant. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. The result is in line with Okeke 1995 and Agabi 2002 who at different times opined that both male and female principal leadership performance in their supervisory roles in the school were the same.

#### Hypothesis II

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers perception on female principals leadership role in schools. Mean score, standard deviation and t-test of difference between male and female teachers perception of female principals leadership roles in schools.

**Table 2**

Male	Females				
X	SD	X	SD	t-value	p-value
1.00	0.00	0.61	0.27	3.43	0.00
N = 200	df = 1.98 Alfa level 0.05				

The above table showed that the statistical in table 2 is significant as the t-value is greater than p-value at 0.5, the act while the researcher is prepared to reject or accept the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The findings is in line with and earlier study conducted by Undie (1996) and Eteng (2004) who discovered that gender affects leadership role especially in the aspect of discipline. But there was no particular difference as in whether the principals of the schools were males or females.

#### Hypothesis III

There is no significant difference male and female teachers. Perception of female principal leadership in decision making in secondary in Cross River State.

**Table 3**

Mean score, standard deviation and t-test of difference between male and female principal decision making.

Male	Females				
X	SD	X	SD	t-value	p-value
0.8	0.22	0.85	0.23	0.5	0.66
N = 200	df = 1.98 Alfa = 0.05				

From the hypothesis since the p-value is higher than 0.05 then there is no significant difference and so the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies both male and female teachers have similar feelings on the way the female principals make-decision compared to their male counterparts in secondary school in Cross River State. This finding is also in line with the view Bosah (1998) as well as Undie, (1993) who earlier articulated that when a leader of a secondary school is good, it will be seen by all irrespective of gender or creed.

#### Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers perception on female leadership in communication.

**Table 4**

Means scores, standard deviation and t-test of difference between male and female teachers' perception of female principal leadership roles.

Male		Female			
X	SD	X	SD	T-value	p-value
0.72	0.22	.77	0.15	0.55	.58

N= 200 df = 1.98 Alfa = 0.05

The result of the statistical test for hypothesis 4 showed that the test is not significant as the p-value of 0.58 is by far higher than the ALFA level which implies the null hypothesis will be accepted. Accepting the null hypothesis means that there is no significant difference in male and female teachers's perception of female principals leadership in communication.

This is in line with the study done by Okeke , Okerie and Nwagber (1992). Which reported that the teachers' have similar feeling about gender leadership roles in communication.

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers perception on female principal leadership in financial management.

**Table 5**

Mean, score, standard deviation and t-test of difference between male and female teachers perception of female principal perception of financial management.

Male	Female X				
X	SD	x	SD	t-value	p-value
.81	.22	.85	.25	.50	.61

N= 200 df = 1.98 Alfa level 0.05

The result in table 5 above showed that the statistical test was not significant, hence the p-value of 0.61 is higher than the alfa 0.05, Here the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that both the male and female teachers see the female principal the same way in her approach to the management of school finance. This does not agree with the study done in (1990) and (1991) by Keeves, and learning, respectively which argues that when it comes to monetary issues the teachers differ in their perception of their female principals on how they manage the secondary school resources and also was in line with the views of Arinze (1998) who from his study holds the view that female principals are most times autocratic and rarely involve their teachers especially when it involves monetary reward.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study concluded that the teachers' perception of female principals' leadership roles in secondary schools are the same when compared with their males counterparts. And that there was no significant difference in male and female teachers' perception of female principal leadership roles in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. It was therefore concluded that the female principals should be encouraged since they impact more discipline in the school system.

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