

Perception of Academic Staff on Roles of Tertiary Institutions in Addressing Leadership Problems Facing Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to assess the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population is comprised of all academic staff in North-Central Nigeria. A total number of 400 sample sizes was used for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. A questionnaire was adopted as an instrument for data collection. The study concluded that the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria include; teaching leadership principles and styles via the GST programme and inculcation of best leadership styles and principles, carrying out research on causes of leadership failure, solutions to leadership problems, recommendations on models that suit Nigeria political structure. The paper recommended that the government at every level should involve the tertiary institutions in the running of government by engaging them to carry out research and provide technical support in law reforms and electoral acts amendment.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a country is faced with leadership problems. For instance, Tribune cited leadership and management that noted that Nigeria is a dwarf trying to make a name for herself in West Africa, despite her enormous assets that should make her a key player among the world's giants. Its current situation does a great disservice to those who risked their lives to secure the country's freedom, especially considering how promising it began. Nigeria is a study in retrogression when compared to other nations like Indonesia and Malaysia, who also attained independence about the same time Nigeria did. Nigeria's per capita income has decreased since 1960. The state of the infrastructure was better back then than it is now. Thus, Ayeni and Ezirim (2023) noted that there is doubt if there has been any positive development in the area of infrastructural development in the three levels of government. The education system was better in the 1960s than it is now; ditto for health services. The rate of employment in 1960 was higher than it was in 2021, while the rate of poverty is higher today in Nigeria than it was in 1960. The above problems can be associated with leadership failure. The above is corroborated by Ayeni, Udochukwu, and Obatayo (2018, p. 96) when they posited that "the reason why federalism is not working in Nigeria is because some perceived national politicians are benefiting from the current federal system that concentrated powers and resources to the central government".

The Nigerian Institute of Leadership (n.d) noted that Nigeria's underdevelopment problem is linked to leadership failure. Thus, the socioeconomic problem facing Nigeria is a result of political failure and bad governance (Ayeni, Sani, Idris, & Uzoigwe, 2019; Manga, 2019; Adamaagashi, 2023; Muhammed & Ayeni, 2018). More importantly is that poverty, food insecurity, political instability, low technological development, poor quality of education, inflation and high rate of unemployment are signs of leadership failure (Muhammad & Mohammed, 2019; Muhammed & Ayeni, 2018). Also, former President Olusegun Obasanjo on Monday blamed poor leadership for Nigeria's economic and infrastructural situation. The former president also blamed the country's retrogressive growth on poor leadership. "We are not there, is a factor of leadership. We are where we are not because of God's design, given our human and natural resources, but because of bad leadership that could not put the resources to good use. "Until we get the problem of leadership right, we will not go anywhere," Obasanjo said (Premium Time 2017). The effects of poor leadership in Nigeria result in a high rate of inflation, unemployment rate, institutional corruption, insecurity, political violence, poor infrastructural facilities development, high rate of poverty, high rate of crime, youth restiveness, poor human capital development, poor quality education, and conflicts among others. This is even as Ayeni (2018) noted that any country whose ruling elite cannot transform their natural resources to enhance the standard of living lacks developmental integrity.

According to Leadership and Management (2018), a country's condition is a direct reflection of its leadership. Leaders influence their civilizations to take on specific forms and direct the trajectory of events inside their nations. A

nation's leaders decide the height to which it can ascend. In a same vein, a nation's leadership determines how far it descends. The level of leadership a society or nation has at any given time determines how successful it has been. Consequently, a country's leadership determines its fate. Similar to great businesses, great nations are created, not born. Great leadership produces every great country or organization. Today, every prosperous country has had stable leadership. The quality of leaders Nigeria has experienced points to the observation of Ayeni, Andeshi and Uzoigwe (2022) when they noted that when there is no commitment by the ruling elite to implement a capital budget, it can be said that the decision to create poverty that threatened human security has been created. There is doubt if Nigeria has the required leaders who can turn things around for the betterment of the citizens.

The role of developing Nigeria as a country depends on every Nigerian especially Nigerian tertiary institutions. This is even as Ogunode and Ayeni (2023) have argued that the Vice Chancellors and their roles are vital in the development of the university system. Tertiary institutions globally are recognized as institutions established to solve social, economic, political, technological and environmental problems facing the humanities. Ogunode, and Ayeni, (2024) see tertiary institutions as instruments of societal transformation, while Ogunode and Onakoya. (2024) viewed tertiary institutions as institutions designed to solve problems. For Ogunode, Tseveda, and Atim (2024) tertiary institutions were established to aid the development of a community and to provide solutions to the various problems confronting the society.

The problem of leadership in Nigeria has got to the level where scholars in various institutions across the country will have to come together and see how to address the problem of leadership facing the country. It is based on this that this study is aimed to assess the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria in North-central Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper is anchored on role theory. The underlying idea of the role theory is that the social role theory that was emerging at the time concentrated on how well people assumed and performed their roles in social situations. People's commitment to identifying with the expectations imposed on them varies, but they may not fully embrace all the identities linked with their roles. People may identify as belonging to specific statuses or positions as a result of these encounters, or others may identify them as such. The behaviors and obligations that members of society are required to fulfill are referred to as social roles. Social roles assign men and women certain actions based on their gender. Gender roles are what these roles are called. Mother, caregiver, and other societal roles are examples of women's gender roles.

The theory is related to the present study because every stakeholders in the business of national development has a role to play in the development of the country. Nigeria as a country is facing leadership problem that hindered social, economic and technological development over the decades. For example,

the various tertiary institutions has roles to play in addressing the leadership problem facing Nigeria.

A leader is someone who gives their people motivation and desire. A visionary is someone who knows how to make their vision a reality. A leader provides the resources and encouragement necessary for their team to succeed. A leader's general responsibilities include mentoring, inspiring, and guiding people (Perry, 2022). They help people advance in their careers and inspire teams throughout difficult times. To keep teams cohesive and focused on common objectives, a leader oversees individuals. They set an example of collaboration and lead by example (Perry, 2022). A leader is an individual who manages others in an organization by making decisions and carrying them out.

A leader is someone who is in charge of organizing, guiding, and managing others. They are visionaries who motivate and encourage their team to reach the desired outcome (Pandey 2023). The role of a leader may be more crucial than ever in today's environment. In this article, let's learn about the roles and responsibilities of a leader. A leader is someone who directs and motivates a group of people or an individual to accomplish a certain goal. Those who are leaders inspire followers to take the initiatives necessary for success. The abilities required to be an effective leader must be developed via learning and practice (Pandey 2023). A leader according to Ogunode, Olowonefa, and Ayoko (2023) and Ogunode (2023) is a person who inspires others to work and carry out specific responsibilities. A leader is someone who identifies a goal and achieves the goal.

The word Leadership has been defined in so many Ways by different scholars and as a result, it has become almost an impossibility to come up with a single definition that is acceptable to scholars of various divides. Leadership has been defined as a necessary phenomenon in political field. It is the capacity in a person or in a group of persons to inspire confidence and thereby regard for himself or themselves to guide and govern the followers (Okaneme, 2017).

According to Uveges (2003), leadership is the capacity to shape social norms within a group or organization, set objectives for the group, and devise strategies for achieving those objectives. Social power is used in the performance of leadership. Therefore, leadership and social power should not be seen in isolation because they have a significant impact on behavior, productivity both within and across organizations, situational adaptation, and morale within them (Nwagboso & Duke 2012). According to Omolayo (2006), effective leadership is like a vital oil that keeps the government's machinery turning smoothly. Leadership, in his opinion, is what separates a nation's success from its failure. The qualities of good leadership according to Orji and Ekpo (2010) include transparency, accountability, honesty, diplomacy, etc. A leader is someone who leads a group of people in the direction of the accomplishment of set goals.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, while a quantitative research method was employed. The reason for adopting the

quantitative research method was because the quantitative research method is backed up with facts (Ayeni, Saman, & Sani, 2019). The population is comprised of all academic staff in the region. A total of 400 sample sizes were selected from four public universities in North-Central Nigeria. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 4 universities: 2 state and 2 federal universities. Simple random sampling was used to select 100 academic staff in each of the public universities. A questionnaire was adopted as an instrument for data collection. A 20-item research-made questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was titled: Questionnaire on Perception of Male and Female Academic Staff on the Roles of Tertiary Institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria (QPASRTIALPN). The survey was divided into two portions. The respondents' personal biographical information was requested in Section A, while 16 items in "Section B" asked academic staff members, both male and female, about their opinions on the roles of postsecondary institutions in tackling Nigeria's leadership issues. The QPASRTIALPN has a reliability coefficient of 0.98. Frequency counts, percentages, averages, standard deviation, and t-test statistics were used to examine the data. Every hypothesis was examined at the significance level of 0.05.

RESEARCH RESULT

Table 1: Analysis of Responses on the Roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria

N= 400				
S/N	Roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria	X	S.D	Decision
Roles of tertiary institutions				
1.	Teach via the GST programme and inculcate the best leadership styles and principles that support societal development.	3.51	0.57	Agreed
2.	Research on causes and solutions, leadership models that suit Nigeria's political structure and the best leadership approach to adopt to aid the development of Nigeria.	2.61	0.92	Agreed
3.	Provide community services that centred public sensitization on good leadership and the roles of the people to call for accountability.	3.10	0.85	Agreed
4.	Establishment of centres for the studies of leadership to aid research development on leadership in Nigeria and Africa.	2.65	0.92	Agreed
5.	Development of programmes basically on leadership such as B.SC, M. Sc and PhD in leadership	3.05	0.82	Agreed

6.	Organization of seminars, symposiums and conferences for government officials especially political actors	3.20	0.79	Agreed
7	Provide technical support in drafting constitutions and laws that will aid the delivery of quality leadership to all of Nigeria.	3.40	0.98	Agreed
	Average	3.03	0.88	Agreed

Table 1 shows that the academic staff agreed that tertiary institutions have roles in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria by teaching via the GST programme and inculcating the best leadership styles and principles that support societal development. (item 1, $x = 3.51$), research on causes and solutions, leadership model that suits Nigeria's political structure and best leadership approaches to adopt to aid the development of Nigeria (item 2, $x = 2.61$), Provide community services that centred public sensitization on good leadership and the roles of the people to call for accountability (item 3, $x = 3.10$), the establishment of centres for the studies of leadership to aid research development on leadership in Nigeria and Africa. (item 4, $x = 2.65$), development of programmes basically on leadership such as B.SC, M. Sc., and PhD in leadership (item 5, $x = 3.05$), organization of seminars, symposiums and conferences for government officials especially political actors (item 6, $x = 3.20$), Provide technical support in drafting constitutions and laws that will aid delivery of quality leadership to all Nigeria (item 7, $x = 3.40$). Table 1 shows that based on the sectional mean of 3.03, the result indicated that academic staff agreed that tertiary institutions have roles in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female academic staff on the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria.

Table 2: Test the perception of male and female academic staff on the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria.

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab
Male Academic staff	209	35.48	8.21			
Female Academic staff	191	34.31	8.49	5.47	1.84	1.91

The result obtained from the table 2 analysis shows that the value of t-calculated (1.81) < t-table (1.91) that is, t-calculated is less than the t-table. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected at a 0.05 level of significance. That means there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female

academic staff on the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria.

Roles of Tertiary Institutions in Addressing Leadership Problems Facing Nigeria Variables: Includes teaching leadership principles and styles via the GST programme and inculcation of best leadership styles and principles, carrying out research on causes of leadership failure, solutions to leadership problems, recommendations on models that suit Nigeria political structure. And come up with leadership approaches or theories that will aid the development of Nigeria, provide community services that centred public sensitization on good leadership and the roles of the people to call for accountability from their leaders, establishment centres for the studies of leadership in Nigeria and Africa, development of programme on leadership such as B.SC, M. Sc and PhD in leadership, organizes seminar, symposium and conferences for government official and especially political actors and provide technical support in constitutions and laws that will aid delivery of quality leadership.

According to Okunode, Iyabode, and Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022), tertiary education is a highly developed educational system designed to develop human capital through teaching, research, and community service. University and other higher education establishments are included in the tertiary education, often known as higher education. These post-secondary educational establishments can be arranged in various ways; they are typically housed both inside and outside of universities as universities and other tertiary education establishments (Alemu, 2018). Tertiary education is viewed by National policy on Education (2013) as the education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres such as the Nigeria French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI).

The following are the objectives of tertiary education: to reduce skill shortages by producing skilled labor relevant to the demands of the labor market; to promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship, and community service; to forge and cement national unity; and to promote understanding and interaction on a national and international level (FRN, 2013). To accomplish these goals, tertiary education will provide high-level training in manpower and contribute to the development of the country.

Tertiary institutions have a lot of roles to play in fixing society problems and contributing to nation-building and national development. Ogunode, Tseveda, and Atim (2024) posited that tertiary institutions are seen as places to look upon when there are pressing issues facing the nation.

DISCUSSION

Perception of Academic Staff on the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria in north central, Nigeria

The table's results showed that academic staff members were in agreement that postsecondary institutions have a role to play in addressing Nigeria's leadership issues. Some of these roles are as follows; Teaching through the GST program and instilling the best leadership styles and principles that support societal development; researching causes and solutions; creating a leadership model that suits Nigeria's political structure and the best leadership approaches to adopt to aid in Nigeria's development; providing community services that center on public sensitization to good leadership and the roles of citizens to demand accountability; establishing centers for the study of leadership to support research development on leadership in Nigeria and Africa; creating a leadership program that consists primarily of B.Sc., M. Sc., and PhD programs; organizing seminars, symposiums, and conferences for government officials, especially political actors; and providing technical assistance This result is in line with the discoveries of Beland, (2005); Ayeni, Tusayi, Joseph, and Obatayo (2018); Ogunode, Ayeni, and Olorundare (2024), and Ogunode, Ayeni, and Ogwuche (2024) that concluded that tertiary institutions roles in addressing national problems include; teaching, researching, provision of community services, development of special programme, establishment of centres, organization of seminars and conferences and provision of technical support to national policies and programme.

Hypothesis Testing

According to the outcome of the table 2 analysis, $t\text{-calculated}(1.81) < t\text{-table}(1.91)$, or $t\text{-calculated}$ is smaller than the $t\text{-table}$. Consequently, at the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicates that perceptions of the roles of postsecondary institutions in tackling Nigeria's leadership issues are not significantly different across male and female academic staff.

Finding Validation

These results were verified by the data gathered. Many experts stress that tertiary institutions have a lot to offer in supporting the development of leadership in Nigeria. These roles include the following: teaching through the GST program and instilling the best leadership styles and principles that support societal development; researching causes and solutions; providing community services that center on public sensitization to good leadership and the roles of the people to call for accountability; establishing centers for the studies of leadership to aid in the development of research on leadership in Nigeria and Africa; developing programs primarily on leadership, such as B.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tertiary institutions has an Important role to play in the leadership development in Nigeria: The leadership factor plays a significant role in the tansformation of the country through quality delivery of goods and service to the citizents. A leadership program that is integrated into academic curricula at various tertiary institutions will enhance the caliber of leadership in Nigeria with adequate support from these institutions. arranging a seminar for national

leaders, both elected and appointed. offering services to raise awareness about effective leadership and standards for holding leaders responsible. provision of technical assistance for the examination of the constitution, election legislation, and anti-corruption statutes.

Analytical Data Support: Data analysis shows that tertiary institutions have roles to play in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria. The major roles include; teaching via the GST programme and inculcating the best leadership styles and principles that support societal development, research on causes and solutions, leadership models that suit Nigeria's political structure and best leadership approaches to aid the development of Nigeria, providing community services that centred on public sensitization on good leadership and the roles of the people to call for accountability, the establishment of centers for the studies of leadership to aid research development on leadership in Nigeria and Africa, development of programme basically on leadership such as B.SC, M. Sc., and PhD in leadership, organization of seminar, symposium and conferences for government official especially political actors and provision of technical support in drafting constitutions and laws that will aid delivery of quality leadership to all Nigeria. The result from hypothesis revealed that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female academic staff on the roles of tertiary institutions in addressing leadership problems facing Nigeria. This underscores the importance of tertiary institutions' roles in the development of Nigerian leaders via teaching of right leadership skills and styles. Development of research on the leadership gap in Nigeria and suggests how to solve them. Provision of technical support in the areas of reforming electoral laws, constitutions and anticorruption laws.

Relevance to Previous Research: The findings from this research are consistent with previous literature which emphasizes the importance of training for political and appointed leaders in the country to improve their leadership skills and service delivery output.

Thus, it is important for Nigerian policy makers to understand and utilize the full potential of tertiary institutions in leadership development in Nigeria by inviting them to fully participate in leadership process of Nigeria and to help improve the quality of leadership in Nigeria through research and provision of technical assistance on national programme. Based on the findings of this study, the paper hereby recommended that both the federal and state governments should involve the staff of tertiary institutions in the running of government by engaging them to carry out research and provide technical support in law reforms and electoral acts amendment. Secondly, federal and state governments should encourage tertiary institutions to discharge their community service roles very well in the areas of creating public awareness of political issues and good governance.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Considering the researchers' own limited knowledge and skills, the researcher has come to the realization while producing this article that there are still numerous deficiencies in language, writing, and presentation style. As a

result, the researcher anticipates helpful critiques and recommendations from a range of sources to ensure the piece is flawless.

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