

**INFLUENCE OF INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP TECHNIQUES ON STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

BY

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Abstract

This paper focused on how innovative leadership techniques can influence student's academic performance. Leadership can be termed as a relationship that involves planning, mobilizing, influencing, and guiding team members toward the desired goals. Innovation leadership in improving the quality of education is an effort to make sustainable school improvements. Student academic performance was briefly discussed in the paper. The paper discussed the techniques thus: steps, qualities and the skills that can be employed as an innovative leadership strategy to influence students' academic performance. It was also concluded that innovative leaders are creative visionaries with good ideas that can be use to motivate subordinates to improve students' academic performance. The study further made some recommendations that a school leader must be firm and innovative in nature in order to meet up with the modern techniques to facilitate effective teaching and learning. It was also recommended that to meet up with globalization in education sector, the educational leadership must be innovative in nature and be ready to move along with subordinates that are more focus on innovation to positively improve the students' academic performance.

Keywords: Innovative leadership, Techniques, Students, Academic performance

Introduction

Education in the 21st century is changing more rapidly than most experts would have ever imagined and technology seems to advance almost on a daily basis. Academic instruction and student service delivery methods that did not exist a decade ago are now common in our schools. Today's educational leader is dealing with complex issues on a daily basis and economic

realities are forcing the educational leadership to become more creative and innovative to enable them meet up globally. Leadership can be termed as a relationship that involves mobilizing, influencing, and guiding team members toward the desired goals. The modern leader is a democratic and innovative organizer who worked with staff member, rather than ahead of the member.

Innovative leaders are creative thinkers who are able to generate creative ideas that become the basis of innovation in the school system Innovation leadership in improving the quality of education is an effort to influence the students' academic and non academic performance at all levels. it can be done if there is readiness to change, because of the innovation itself requires passion and interest to new ways of managing educational activities. When viewed from the organization / institution of the school, the leadership position of the principal is very important, the effects of the implementation of roles and duties will affect all aspects of school organizational life. Leaders need innovative leadership skills as they learn to operate in challenging and unpredictable circumstances.

In addition, they need to create an environment for innovation within the school setting. On the other hand, academic performance is the out-put by a learner having complete designed academic curriculum measured. The academic performance could be measured in different ways, thus terminally by teachers or a standard body as the case may be. Agharuwhe (2013) asserted that students' academic performance is the main focus in the overall educational performance. Academic performance is referred to as educational outcome. However, education as a concept is the bases for of every aspect of life, for quality education today, there is need for innovation in the area of pedagogy. For innovation to take place in schools, there is need for innovative leadership techniques that can be use to influence the students' academic performance.

Statement

Current education systems need school leaders who have a high level of competence and exhibit strong leadership practices to influence the academic activities which will in-turn produce excellent students. Innovative leader needs ideas and strategies to ensure the success of schools,

mostly in meeting the demands of stake holders in both academic and non academic activities. In other words, school leaders need to be sensitive to innovative changes in the field of education. Therefore, new challenges in education system are to equip students with adequate skills to meet up and cope globally on education wise.

Hsiao, Chang, and Chen (2014) reported that current school leaders/principals have to be creative and innovative so to inculcate innovative techniques into the school system so as to improve the students' academic performance. In addition, ChanLin, Hong, Horng, Chang, and Chu (2006) revealed that changes in both educational policy and teaching practices can help students accomplish in the realm of innovative and be creative in nature. Therefore, school principals/leader and teachers need to be motivated to introduce innovative strategies in teaching and learning process activities.

Studies have been carried out that are related to innovation and leadership, Joseph and Dan worked on what is an innovative educational leader, the study focused on leadership style, and the characteristics. Hsiao and Chang (2011) worked on the effects of innovation management on school performance of secondary schools performance in Thailand, while Muhammad, Ali, Bambang, Imron and Arifin (2016) carried out study on Innovation Leadership in Improving the Quality of Education in Indonesia. None of the above researchers focused on how innovative leadership techniques thus: steps, qualities and skills can influence students' academic performance which is the focus of this paper.

Students' Academic Performance

Adebayo (2016) posited that academic performance is a veritable tool that can be used to determine and predict the standard of any educational system in Nigeria in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness. It is a yardstick that can be used to know how far a student has assimilated the course of work during teaching and learning within a stipulated period of time. Bello (2012) stated that examination is the most viable instrument to measure students' academic performance. In other words, performance is the accomplishment of any working-out activities in accordance with the organizations' objectives. Therefore, performance is all about achieving

the goals of an organization through working as expected to earn desire result. It is concerned with behaviour that is how an individual, groups, organisation or teams are involved in getting a work done with the use of innovative leadership to motivate students and teachers on new ideas of pedagogical aspect of school system. .

Steps as Innovative Leadership Technique

Mumford and Licuanan (2004) state that in order to adapt to new changes, the need for innovation in organizations has resulted in a new focus on the role of leaders in shaping the nature and success of creative efforts. This new motive for innovation represents the shift from the 20th century and traditional view of organizational practices, which discouraged employee innovative behaviors, to the 21st-century view of valuing innovative thinking as a potentially powerful influence on organizational performance as stated by (Mumford, Scott, Gaddis, and Strange, 2002). .

Research from authors like Jack and Joseph (2014), suggests that the act of innovating has definite social implications in the personal, organizational, and global context. According to Joanna, Marla, Capozzi, & Jonathan. (2008) focus on three people management fundamentals may produce the building blocks of an innovative organization. The first step is to formally integrate innovation into the strategic management agenda of senior leaders. Second, executives can make better use of existing (and often untapped) talent for innovation, without implementing disruptive change programs, by creating the conditions that allow dynamic innovation networks to emerge and flourish, and thirdly, they can take explicit steps to foster an innovation culture based on trust among employees. In such, in a culture, people understand that their ideas are valued, trust that it is safe to express those ideas, and oversee risk collectively together with their leaders.

Joanna et al (2008) indicated that most senior executives do not actively encourage and model innovative behavior. If they did, they could give employees the support needed to innovate. According to Tanya (2010), seven innovative leadership steps include the following:

- Embrace the challenge

- Drive change through collective creativity and knowledge
- Shape the culture
- Establish a professional learning system
- Decide and systematize
- Ensure digital access and infrastructure
- Demand accountability

Qualities as Innovative Leadership Technique

Innovative Leadership has been embed with a strong network of value system, as stated in New and Improved, LLC Newsletter (2013), comprising of Integrity, Tenacity, Curiosity, Courage and Humility similar to the five fingers of a hand, which when united, can forms a power punch of an Innovative Leader par excellence. Henry (2013) advocated the distinction between a leader and a follower and stated that there is today an emerging distinction between “leadership” and “innovative leadership,” a new vision of what it takes to become an innovative leader and a leader of innovation.

Bill (2012) stated five essential qualities that an innovative leader must possess:

- Passion for innovation
- A long-term perspective.
- The courage to fail and learn from failure.
- Deep engagement with the innovators.
- Willingness to tolerate mavericks and defend them from middle management

Skill as Innovative leadership Techniques

For any leadership style to be effective, there is still needs to possess an Innovative Educational Leadership skill Set that serves as the foundation for an individual’s leadership style. According to Joseph and Dan (2014), Innovative leadership skill among others is “HELPPSS”. The acronym addressed the skills and traits of an innovative leader, thus:

- Heart: is a necessary leadership skill that an innovative leader need to enable him /her to pay attention to every school activities and do justice to every situation that is central to

education services. It gives the leader a sense of compassion that comes in day to day activities. This skill gives us pause to think for a few moments about individual situations and not lump everything together for the ease of arises. With this skill, democratic leadership style will set in that will enable individual to contribute their creative mind to the progress of the school and in turn, influence the students' academic performance.

- Empathy: another skill indentify with an innovative leader is to be emphatic in nature. An innovative leader must have an ability to understand individual and share out of their feelings. How a leader treats people most likely determines how they feel both about the leader and their job. The greatest positive impact on the workers' productivity usually based on the increased attention from their leaders/management (Hawthorne, 2011). This was supported by Jack and Joseph (20114) who found out that a leader who share out of his/ her works are more successful than those that are autocratic in nature as a leader. Joseph and Dan (2014)) further supported this view by concluding that in order for a leader to be innovative, workers must be respected and to have dignity for others which can only be done by creating new things along with the workers.
- Learning: is an essential skill of an innovative leadership. It is believe that knowledge is power and continuous learning is necessary to keep up with innovation in pedagogy and technology. As an innovative leader, there must be readiness to learn new things from others and not to be almighty decider. Learning is a continuous thing; therefore, there will be new idea and knowledge that will improve the school system. Attending workshop, seminars, conferences and son on is part of learning that an innovative leader needs in order to input innovation knowledge received on school management to influence both the students academically and the teachers on new ways of teaching and learning.
- Passion: passion is an extremely critical skill that cannot be jettison in education system. Joseph and Dan (2014) believe that there is no substitute for passion in any profession. This skill must be acquired by an innovative leader to enable development in school to meet up with the global ideas. To be an innovative leader in education sector, there must be a circle passion for education and must be maintained. Therefore, Passion is a grease to machine for smooth running, with this submission, passion is a credibly important

innovative leadership skill that can be use to influence students' academic performance by the school administrators.

- **Perseverance:** as one of the most critical innovative leadership skills to be possess by an educational leader. In all aspect of life, perseverance is a key factor to success. It is a critical innovative leadership skill necessary by leaders of all levels of education since their mission is to work with others with the aim of achieving the set objectives, Perseverance is a relevant innovative leadership skill when expectations are to improve and grow a program that can influence students' academic performance (Joseph and Dan, 2014).
- **Strategy:** is an important skill to leaders, but mostly to an innovative educational leader. An innovative leader must bear it in mind to plan well, organized and implement the plan as at due to in-turn achieve the set educational/school goal. An innovative leader must possess strategic skill and know how to easily plan, organize, and implement the strategic plans of a school to meet up with the academic performance expected by the parents and the government at large. If a leader can successfully implement the strategic plan of school, then strategy is an important innovative leadership skill to employ as a tool to improve the students' academic performance.
- **Speed:** speed is another innovative leadership skill that gives glory to educational leaders/principals. Leaders who work with pace always excel. Speed as a skill only relevant if the school activities are accompanied with qualities at delivery. Leaders who possess this skill excel at putting together and leading committees through their assigned charge and responsibilities. As an innovative leadership skill, speed is only relevant if quality work accompanies the speed. Speedy leaders are perceived as a leader that accomplished the task by submitting the work schedule to the institution on complete and as at due.

Conclusion

Innovative educational leaders are creative visionaries with innovative ideas and, most importantly techniques to lead and positively influence students' academic performance. It was also concluded that an innovative educational leadership technique requires the: steps, skills and qualities and can be used to positively influence students' academic performance. It was

concluded that, to be an effective innovative educational leader, there is need to be democratic to an extent by working harmoniously with other creative minded staff and be ready to learn from those that are more expose technologically to move the school forward. It was also concluded that an innovative educational leader must be a good planner, organizer, and implementer that works with pace to deliver the set goals of the education/school.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Innovative leaders should be firm and innovative to facilitate and influence teaching and learning in a modern ways to improve students' academic performance
2. To meet up with global need, innovative educational leaders should be creative and technological oriented and work with subordinates that are more exposed technologically
3. Innovative educational leadership techniques thus: steps, skills and qualities should be acquired by the educational leaders to enable positive influence on the students' academic performance
4. An innovative educational leader should be a transformational leader that attracts innovation in developing the school activities.

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