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**ENHANCING PRINCIPAL'S CONFLICT MANAGEMENT THROUGH
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE**

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which transformational leadership style enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. This study was carried out in Enugu State of Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. Population for the study consisted all the 913 public secondary school principals and teachers in Enugu state. Sample for the study was 314 comprising of 94 principals and 220 teachers drawn from the population for the study. Proportionate, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to draw the sample. A structured questionnaire titled questionnaire on Extent to which Transformational Leadership Style Enhances Principal's Conflict Management in Secondary Schools Questionnaire (ETLSEPCMSSQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was constructed by the researcher and was validated by three research experts. The overall reliability coefficient obtained for the instrument was 0.93. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions was t-test statistic was used for hypothesis testing at 0.05 level of significance. Major findings of the study revealed that teachers and principals are expected to utilize transformational leadership strategies in order to improve their capabilities and manage conflicts among the teachers and students in secondary schools. It was recommended among other things that the government and other stakeholders should organize workshops and seminar on the transformational leadership style and the way it will influence the management of conflict in secondary schools.

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Introduction

Secondary school administration is becoming more and more complex. This complexity is due to many factors. These factors include population explosion in secondary school, paucity of basic teaching and learning facilities, poor funding, and inadequate personnel to mention but a few. In the face of these problems, school principals are traced with herculean tasks in the leadership of secondary and ensuring that secondary school system discharges its legal responsibility of turning out students that will not only be useful to themselves but also to the society in the other words, there is a need for effective leadership of secondary school. Principals do adopt different leadership style for the purpose.

Sanni (2018) defines leadership styles as the unique and peculiar approach of a leader to his schedules of duty with the aim and belief that such approach will help to achieve the goals of the organization. Principals as chief executives in secondary school administration Matson (2015) contends that teaching and learning in a secondary school is significantly affected by the principal's leadership style. He also explained that staff and student discipline are affected by the principal's leadership style. When the style of the principal is not effective, staff, student's welfare will suffer and staff morale and productivity will collapse. The concept of conflict has to do with disagreement, struggle or contest between people's beliefs, values and interests which are likely to clash with those of others in the course of human events or interactions because of diversity in personality types. According to Obi (2014) "conflict can be seen as reflection of human and social problems which involves mutual hostility and differences, opposition, and use of violence, turning point or crises which can escalate to the level of psychological warfare or physical or any other war". He further stated that conflict exists whenever an action by one person or group of persons prevents, obstructs, interferes injures or in some way makes less likely the desired action of another person or group of persons.

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This implies that conflict is bound to occur whenever people are latent; when the underlying conditions are yet to be recognized and perceived, as well as when the condition recognized is felt with the development of tension and manifested through open aggression or physical combat. It shows the degree of disparity in levels of people's perception of issues and reaction to matters that negatively affect them. Enyi (2012) and Obi (2014) agreed that conflict engenders hostility, hinders school effectiveness. They traced the level of school effectiveness to leadership failure which is manifested in increased conflict between principals and staff, principals and students, and school authority and students.

From all indications conflict is inevitable in every human organization including the school organization sequel to individual and group differences. Obasi (2018) stated that school conflict as mutual hostility, can occur in the form of insult, name calling, defamation of character, demotion, marginalization, deprivation, violence and destruction among others. In the secondary school system, conflict can occur between the students and the school authority, between the teachers and the students, between the principals and the staff and even between the school and the community. Most times human needs of teachers working in the school are likely to be incompatible with the demands of the school itself. This might be expressed through name calling, insult or abandonment of duties. The way a school principal perceives a particular situation may differ from the perception of a classroom teacher. This might be expressed through marginalization or deprivation. Students who felt their needs are not met might express this through demonstration.

Transformation leadership style is one of such leadership styles many authors have defined in various ways. According to Wysocki and Kepner (2015), transformational leadership is a style of leadership where the leader works with employees to identify the needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed

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members of the group. It also enhances the motivation, morale, and job performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the followers sense of identity and self to the project and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers in order to inspire them and raise their interest in the project; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work; understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers and allowing the leader to align followers with tasks that enhance their performance. Transformational leadership style is associated with four major components which include charisma or idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. This involves establishing one's beliefs and values and being consistent with it. A leader with idealized influence builds in subordinate's strong sense of purpose, champions existing new possibilities and inculcates in their respect, trust and faith. (Heywood, 2013, Wysocki and Kepner, 2015).

Researchers have enumerated different strategies for handling conflicts; these include Larson and Gray in Kamalakkannan (2010) among others. These strategies include dialogue arbitration, boxing the problem, effective catharsis, super ordinate goals, and use of Gift theory, dominance and hierarchical appeal among others. The new science theories have equally advocated a paradigm shift in the management of conflict. This is seen in the application of quantum skills in conflict management, where conflict is encouraged and used for organizational transformation. Transformational leadership style has various components. They are idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, intellectual Stimulation and Individualized Consideration.

According to Bass and Avolin (2010), idealized influence involves both idealized behaviours and idealized attitudes. In a school setting, a principal with idealized influence instills pride in both staff and students; he acts as role model, emphasizes high moral standards and goes beyond self-interest for the good of the school. Inspirational motivation involves a leader's ability

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to talk optimistically about what needs to be accomplished. A school principal who exhibits this feature of transformational leadership style articulates the school vision and inspires staff and students to strive for its attainment. He expresses confidence that goal will be achieved in spite of hitches.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which transformational leadership style enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State. Specially, the study sought to determine the extent to which:

- i. idealized influence enhances principals conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state
- ii. Inspirational motivation enhances principals' conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does idealized influence enhance principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State?
2. To what extent does inspirational motivation enhance principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance;

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the extent to which idealized influence enhance principal's conflict management in secondary school.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the extent to which inspirational motivation enhance principal's conflict management in secondary school.

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Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. This study was carried out in Enugu State of Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. Population for the study consisted all the 913 public secondary school principals and teachers in Enugu state. As at the time of this study, there were 291 principals and 622 teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu state. The sample for the study was 314 comprising of 94 principals and 220 teachers drawn from the population for the study. Proportionate, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to draw the sample. The sample represents 20% of principals and teachers in Enugu state as at the time of the study. The choice of 75% of the population was informed by the recommendation of Boll and Gall in Uzoagulu (2011) who averred that 20% of any population less than one thousand is enough to justify inferences on the entire population in empirical studies. A structured questionnaire titled questionnaire on Extent to which Transformational Leadership Style Enhances Principal's Conflict Management in Secondary Schools Questionnaire (ETLSEPCMSSQ) was used for data collection. It was made up of 14-items. The instrument was constructed by the researcher and was validated by three research experts.

The reliability of the instrument was established thus: validated copies were administered to 50 secondary school principals and teachers in Aharia Local government Area of Imo state. Out of this number, 20 principals were males and 30 were teachers. This sample was considered to have same characteristics as the subjects of the study. Their responses were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha method. Cronbach's Alpha method was preferred because the instrument was not dichotomously scored. Reliability coefficient obtained for the instrument was 0.93. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of two trained

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research assistants. Direct delivery and retrieval system was used. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions.

Response options in the instrument were graded as follows;

VGE: Very Great Extent = 4 points

GE: Great Extent = 3 points

LE: Low Extent = 2 points

VLE: Very Low Extent = 1 point

Hence mean scores were interpreted as follows;

Mean scores from 3.5 – 4.0 – VGE

Mean scores from 2.5 – 3.4 – GE

Mean scores from 1.5 – 2.4 – LE

Mean scores from 0 – 1.4 – VLE

High standard deviation values indicated existence of extreme scores, (hence, unreliable mean),

Lower standard deviation values indicated non-existence of extreme scores; (hence, a reliable mean) for the hypothesis testing, t-test statistic was used at 0.05 level of significance.

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Results

Research Question 1

To what extent does idealized influence enhance principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviation of the teachers on the extent idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State

S/N	Extent idealized influence enhances principals conflict management in secondary schools including;	Male Teachers N=116		Female Teachers N= 186		Overall		Decision
		X ₁	SD ₁	X ₂	SD ₂	X _G	SD _G	
1	Considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions	2.85	0.68	2.77	0.65	2.80	0.66	Great Extent
2	Acts as a role model to both staff and students	2.95	0.68	2.91	0.68	2.93	0.68	Great Extent
3	Goes beyond self-interest for the good of the school	2.86	0.73	2.87	0.71	2.86	0.72	Great Extent
4	Makes personal sacrifice for the benefits of others	3.05	0.68	3.05	0.69	3.05	0.68	Great Extent
5	Instills pride in others for being associated with him/her	2.86	0.63	2.84	0.62	2.85	0.62	Great Extent
6	use constructive and edifying words when correcting teachers	3.01	0.61	2.98	0.65	2.99	0.64	Great Extent
7	avoid hasty decisions in disciplinary matters	3.21	0.70	3.28	0.68	3.25	0.69	Great Extent
Cluster Mean/SD		2.97	0.67	2.96	0.67	2.96	0.67	Great Extent

The analysis of data presented in table 1 above, the male teachers means range from 2.85 to 3.21 with a cluster mean of 2.97 and standard deviation of 0.67 while those of female teachers ranges from 2.77 to 3.28 with cluster mean of 2.96 and standard deviation of 0.67. The overall cluster mean of the respondents was 2.96 with a standard deviation of 0.67. This demonstrates that idealized transformational leadership influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State to a great extent. The low level of standard deviation shows that the respondents are homogenous in their responses.

Research Question 2

To what extent does inspirational motivation enhance principals' conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation of teachers on the extent inspirational motivation enhances principals' conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State

S/N	extent inspirational motivation enhances principals' conflict management in secondary schools including;	Male Teachers N=116		Female Teachers N= 186		Overall		Decision
		X ₁	SD ₁	X ₂	SD ₂	X _G	SD _G	
8	Talks optimistically about the future	3.27	0.61	3.32	0.62	3.31	0.62	Great Extent
9	Articulates compelling vision of the future	3.06	0.64	3.16	0.63	3.12	0.63	Great Extent
10	Expresses confidence that goal will be achieved	3.27	0.68	3.24	0.70	3.25	0.69	Great Extent
11	Takes a stand on controversial issues	3.34	0.69	3.29	0.72	3.31	0.71	Great Extent
12	Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished	3.34	0.70	3.29	0.72	3.31	0.71	Great Extent
13	use positive reinforcement to strengthen good behavior	3.41	0.51	3.37	0.52	3.38	0.51	Great Extent
14	remove privileges to stop a negative behavior	3.25	0.45	3.24	0.49	3.25	0.47	Great Extent
Cluster Mean/SD		3.28	0.61	3.27	0.63	3.28	0.62	Great Extent

The data presented in Table 3 indicates that the male teachers mean rating range from 3.06 to 3.41 with cluster mean of 3.28 and standard deviation of 0.61 while those of female ranges from 3.16 to 3.32 with a cluster mean of 3.27 and standard deviation of 0.63. The overall cluster mean rating of the respondents is 3.28 with standard deviation of 0.62. This depicts that inspirational motivation enhances principals' conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State. The low standard deviation shows that the respondent's opinions do not differ remarkably to the itemized.

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Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the extent to which idealized influence enhance principal's conflict management in secondary school.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis of mean ratings of mean scores of male and female teachers on the extent to which idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school.

Variables	N	T	Df	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Male	116	0.218	300	0.828	0.08343	0.38308	NS
Female	186						

The result of t-test analysis in Table 2 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significant and 300 degree of freedom for the 7 items is 0.218 with a significant value of 0.828. Since the significant value of 0.828 is more than the 0.05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference regarding the 7 items on the mean scores of male and female teachers on the extent to which idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school in Enugu State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on the extent to which inspirational motivation enhance principal's conflict management in secondary school.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of mean scores of male and female principals on the extent to which inspirational motivation enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school.

Variables	N	T	df	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Male	116	0.069	300	0.945	0.02892	0.41982	NS
Female	186						

The result of t-test analysis in Table 4 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significant and 300 degree of freedom for the eight items is 0.069 with a significant value of 0.945. Since the significant value of 0.945 is more than the 0.05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not

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significant. This means that there is no significant difference with respect to the 7 items on the mean ratings of male and female teachers' on the extent to which inspirational motivation enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school in Enugu State.

Summary of Findings

Findings of this study can be summarized thus;

1. The findings on research question one show that idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools to a great extent. Among the items to justify this findings are that idealized influence considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions, acts as a role model to both staff and students, goes beyond self-interest for the good of the school, and makes personal sacrifice for the benefits of others.
2. The itemized showed that the inspirational motivation enhances principals' conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State to a great extent. The identified items according to the findings include that inspirational motivation enhances talking optimistically about the future, articulating compelling vision of the future, expressing confidence that goal will be achieved, taking a stand on controversial issues.
3. The findings of the study indicated that there is no significant difference regarding the items on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent to which idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school in Enugu State.
4. The findings of the study showed that there is no significant difference with respect to the items on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent to which inspirational motivation enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school Enugu State.

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Discussion of Findings

The result of data collected on research question one indicated that idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools to a great extent. The idealized influence according to the findings include that it considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions, acts as a role model to both staff and students, goes beyond self-interest for the good of the school, makes personal sacrifice for the benefits of others, instills pride in others for being associated with him/her, use constructive and edifying words when correcting teachers and avoid hasty decisions in disciplinary matters. The implication of the findings was that idealized influence enhances the principal administrative job performance in conflict management. The findings of the study were in line with Krishinan (2010) that charismatic and idealized leadership is characterized by followers trust in the correctness of the leader, willingness to obey the leader, and motivational involvement in the mission of the organization. Krishinan (2010) pointed that this type of transformational leadership enhances conflict management in organization. This is through instilling good and influencing leadership quality on the manager or administrator. The findings of the study indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female principals on the extent to which idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school. This depicted that gender of the respondents had no significant influence on the identified great extent to which idealized influence enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools.

The result of the study according to research question two indicated that inspirational motivation enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State to a great extent. The findings revealed that inspirational motivation enhances principals conflict management through talking optimistically about the future, articulating compelling vision of the future, expressing confidence that goal will be achieved, takes a stand on controversial issues,

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talking enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished, using positive reinforcement to strengthen good behaviour and removing privileges to stop a negative behaviour. The findings of the study indicated that inspirational motivation enhances principals' conflict management to a great extent. Therefore the secondary school principals need to adopt inspirational motivation in managing conflict in their institution. The findings were in agreement with Nayab (2010) that through this inspirational motivation as a component of transformational leadership, leaders elevate people from low level of needs and focused on survival by appealing towards their inborn desire to attain higher levels related to love and learning of a legacy. School principals can raise their teachers to attain such higher levels by making vivid description of a good future that raises one's imagination and heightens positive outcomes.

Further, the findings indicated that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female teacher on the extent to which inspirational motivation enhances principal's conflict management in secondary school. The indication was that male and female teachers shared the same view on the identified great extent inspirational motivation enhances principal's conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu State. The findings of no significant influence of gender was supported by Ikeagbu (2015) that gender has no influence on the use of transformational leadership in conflict management among students and teachers in secondary schools.

Conclusions

Conflict management in secondary schools is the employment of strategies to correct perceived incompatibilities resulting typically from interference or opposition in positive manner. The teachers and principals are expected to utilize transformational leadership strategies in order to improve their capabilities and manage conflicts among the teachers and students in secondary

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schools. It is pertinent to establish that a well-designed conflict management system will improve the lives of all persons in the schools, improve productivity of teachers, improve academic performance and reduce unnecessary graveness. It goes beyond teachers and students to improve relationships with those with whom the school interacts. The study the transformational leadership influences the management of conflict in secondary schools. The study therefore identified that the idealized influence, inspirational motivation individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation enhances principals' conflict management in secondary schools to a great extent. The findings indicated that transformational leadership has influence as it enhances principals' conflict management ability in secondary schools.

Based on the identified extent to which transformational leadership influence and enhances principals conflict management in secondary schools as perceived by the teachers, there is need for the administrators to adopt the this leadership style as it influences . This is pertinent to improve the quality of teaching and learning of entrepreneurship conflict management in secondary schools. Principals and teachers need to intensify effort in order to improve the adoption of this leadership style in enhancing the management of conflict in secondary schools in Enugu State. The study therefore concludes that the identified idealized influence, inspirational motivation individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation transformation leadership should be used in enhancing conflict management in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Consequent upon the findings made in this study, the following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. Principals should adopt transformational leadership style in the management of conflict in secondary schools.

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2. The government and relevant bodies should supervise and monitor the leadership style adopted by the principal in the management of conflicts in secondary schools.
3. Government and other stakeholders should organize workshops and seminar on the transformational leadership style and the way it will influence the management of conflict in secondary schools.

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