
**Innovative Leadership and Productivity of Female Employees in Akwa Ibom State
Civil Service**

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine innovative leadership and productivity of female employees in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. Expost-facto research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom State. The population of the study comprised of all civil servants. Stratified Sampling technique was used to select 264 civil servants from the study area and these gave the sample size of 264 respondents that was used for the study. The Main Instrument used in this study was a questionnaire titled "Innovative Leadership and productivity of Female Employees Questionnaire" (ILPFEQ). Face and content validation of the instrument was carried out to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy of study under consideration. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.88 and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics and simple regression. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels. The study revealed that transformational approach to leadership relies on encouraging and motivating followers to participate in molding a successful future for an organization. Also that for the effectiveness, quality, and efficiency of the output, Performance contributes to the assessment of how valuable an employee is to the organization. A perfect leader will make every attempt to make the employees apply themselves completely out of their own will into the common objective of the organization. Finally, 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. One of the recommendations was that employer of the organization should create good working relationship with their employee by motivating them, therefore leading to the positive organizational outputs.

**KEYWORDS: Innovative Leadership, productivity, Female Employees, Civil Service
and Akwa Ibom State**

Introduction

Innovative leaders engage in leadership roles in order to develop micro-innovation fields, i.e. creative energy fields (Gratton, 2007) in organizations and there by stimulate

enthusiasm and energy in other employees which may result in innovation. Metaphorically speaking, innovative leaders may be said to be the spark plugs in such micro-innovation fields, triggering explosions and driving the system towards innovation and organizational entrepreneurship. The innovative leaders ignite change processes which Gratton (2007) terms as “hot spots”; Taylor & La Barre (2007) talk of the importance of “mavericks” and Collins (2001) uses the analogy of “flywheel”. Innovation with the organizational process and tools translate ideas into new processes, products, services or business (Isaksen & Joe, 2006, pp' 54-55). The literal meaning of the innovation is "something new or different introduced" (Dictionary.com, 2011)' However, not all ideas see the face of the implementation. According to Horth (2014), innovative thinking is not reliant on past experience or known facts. It imagines a desired future state and figures out how to get there. It is intuitive and open to possibility. Rather than identifying right answers or wrong answers, the goal is to find a better way and explore multiple possibilities. Innovation is more than just creating new technology; it is about the continual adaptation to the changing environment and available resources that includes creating new business models and strategies for the organization to survive and thrive into the future. Innovation is not a magical fog-laden concept. Because the concept of innovation is used and defined in many ways that can be confusing or misleading, clarification can assist leaders. Getting to common ground on what innovation is and what it is not serves to minimize confusion and chaos.

Statement of the Problem

As problems and circumstances become more complex, they don't fit previous patterns. We can't rapidly or automatically know what to do. To make effective sense of unfamiliar situations and complex challenges, we must have a grasp of the whole of the situation, including its variables, unknowns, and mysterious forces. This requires skills beyond everyday analysis. It requires innovation leadership. As such, this paper will provide a comprehensive study on leadership styles and will also serve as a reference material for further research.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives were to:

1. To find out the influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State
2. To find out the influence of participatory democracy leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

1. What is the influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State?
2. What is the influence of participatory democracy leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State.

HO₂: There is no significant influence of participatory democracy leadership of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Leadership Style

A leadership style refers to a leader's characteristic behaviours when directing, motivating, guiding, and managing groups of people. Great leaders can inspire political movements and social change. They can also motivate others to perform, create, and innovate. As you start to consider some of the people who you think of as great leaders, you can immediately see that there are often vast differences in how each person leads. Fortunately, researchers have developed different theories and frameworks that allow us to better identify and understand these different leadership styles (Cherry, 2020).

The Types of Leadership Styles are:

Participatory Democracy Style: Participatory democracy refers to the process of making joint decisions or at least sharing influence in decision-making by the superior and his or her subordinates (Somech, 2005). Meaning that employees are allowed to influence the decisions made because of concern for quality and this encourages high degree of commitment by employees to their work. Participatory democracy/leadership, though not new, began to flourish in the 1980s in the guise of management policy initiative inspired by the new excellence movement and rise of human resources management.

Clement and Mjoli (2013) pointed out that participatory democracy increases quality of decision-making, contribute to quality of employees work life, promotes employees' motivation to work, increases employees' satisfaction and organizational commitment. This implies that participatory behaviour is a veritable tool that today's managers of universities could not ignore given the fierce competition in global business. This further reveals that participatory behaviour is enriched with a catalogue of merits in formal organizations, like the university administration. Managers should therefore, utilize it if there will be any meaningful result in venture transactions.

Participatory democracy behaviour leads to high level of team outcome (Sagiel, 2002). This assertion concurs with widely-shared notion that participatory democracy has a great utility in organizational and team effectiveness. The source further added that it values the employee more than it does to the job. Meaning that, participatory behaviour is employee friendly which spurs high moral and productivity. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) commented that participatory democratic behaviour solicits different ideas from team members. This demonstrates participatory leadership and open-door policy in which the leader welcomes ideas from stake-holders who feel a sense of belonging in the organization.

Transformational Leadership Style: Transformational leadership is one of the most popular leadership styles in the changing world (Etudor-Eyo, 2015). This implies that, it is an instrument of innovation which university managers must adopt in demonstration of their commitment to the universities' vision. Transformational approach to leadership shows unique characteristics that are in variance with the traditional approaches to leadership. Its theoretical corporation is reflected in leaders' willingness to sacrificially give up the managerial aura that initiates authoritarian style and behaviour to a friendlier and focused way of leading. Transformational leadership tilts towards high productivity and performance with good conflict resolution skill. In transformation leadership behaviour, the leader engages

with others in such a way that the leader and the followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Geijsel, Slegers, Leithwood and Jantiz, 2003). The source remarked that transformational leadership has four specific dimensions. These are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence is the act of putting follower's need first, being a role model for followers, doing the right thing, demonstrating high moral standard, and avoiding the use of power unnecessarily or for personal gain.

The original formulation of transformational leadership theory comes from Burns (1978). At the core of transformational leadership is the concept of transformation, or change of the organization. Tichy and Devana (1986) noticed that companies were being asked to make fundamental changes. Transformational leadership best reflect this change (Bass, 1985). Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership as a process in which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. A chief element of transformation is the ability to cultivate the needs of the followers in a follower centered (person-centered) manner.

Transformative Leadership and Productivity of Female Employee

Transformational leadership, generally considered as a desirable leadership style, has positive effects on various performance outcomes of employees; however, its productivity has been called into question because of a relative neglect of its negative aspects. Addressing this gap, an attempt at rethinking the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance is important (Judge and Piccolo 2004). The paradoxical perspective indicates that conflicting positive and negative effects of transformational leadership can coexist, which provides possibility and rationality for thorough consideration of employees' task performance influenced by transformational leaders. Integrating the principle of diminishing marginal utility and the "Too-Much-of-a-Good-Thing (TMGT)" effect, this research explores an inverted U-shaped relationship between transformational leadership and employee task performance. Furthermore, applying social cognitive theory, we assume an employee's proactive personality moderates the curvilinear influence of transformational leadership on employees' task performance. As expected, results from a study of data from 209 supervisor-subordinate relationships from China showed that the inverted U-shaped relationship between transformational leadership and employees' task performance was moderated by employees' proactive personality. Transformational leadership draws the attention of scholars because of its difference with traditional leadership styles such as directive or transactional leadership (Kark et al. 2018). Transformational leaders can become role models who are admired, respected and trusted, disburse attention to followers' self-development process, encourage innovation by questioning, refraining, and solving old problems through new methods, and inspire to transcend their personal interests for organizational interests (Avolio and Bass 2002). Substantial evidence has shown that transformational leaders influence the expression of subordinates' emotions, attitudes and behaviors (Judge and Piccolo 2004; Liao and Chuang 2007; Bednall et al. 2018). Specifically, the overwhelming majority of studies hold that transformational leadership and desirable individual and organizational outcomes produce a positive linear relationship. For instance, transformational leadership is positively related to emotional intelligence (Brown and Reilly 2008), task performance (Walumbwa et al. 2008; Wang et al. 2005), organizational citizenship behaviors, organizational commitment (Avolio et al. 2004), occupational safety (Barling et al. 2002), team performance (Dionne et al. 2004; Zhang et al. 2011) and team innovation (Eisenbeiss et al. 2008).

Concept of Innovative Leadership

Innovation leadership is a philosophy and technique that combines different leadership styles to influence employees to produce creative ideas, products, and services. The key role in the practice of innovation leadership is the innovation leader (Gliddon, 2006). As an approach to organization development, innovation leadership can support achievement of the mission or the vision of an organization or group. With new technologies and processes, it is necessary for organizations to think innovatively to ensure continued success and stay competitive. (Dess & Pickens, 2000; McEntire, et al 2011; Sarros, et al 2008; Shipton, et al 2005) 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. According to Mumford (2004), without innovation leadership, organizations are likely to struggle. McEntire (2011) stated that this new call for innovation represents the shift from the 20th century, traditional view of organizational practices, which discouraged employee innovative behaviours, to the 21st-century view of valuing innovative thinking as a “potentially powerful influence on organizational performance (Mumford, 2002).

The common objectives of good leadership can be outlined through the following pointers –

Proper Organisation of Employees: Your employees come from different backgrounds. That would mean they have different viewpoints and agendas even when they are working together as an organization. One of the prime objectives of leadership would be to focus on organizing this diverse group of employees. The major objective of leadership is to bring the diverse group of people together towards a common goal – at least for the period that they are at work. This involves communicating in clear terms that the larger agenda of the organization is more important than focussing on the individual goals

Working towards a common goal: The business goals will involve meeting multiple objectives. This can involve meeting the bigger goal of growing the business over the next year or short term goals like meeting the sales figures for the next month. Leadership assumes the objective of making the stakeholders understand the importance of each of these goals and how each of these fit into a larger goal. As a good leader, you should be capable of presenting these goals in a way that can both be acted upon and achievable. Creating realistic and quantifiable goals for achieving the results will make the employees have a sense of accomplishment.

Motivating Employees: This is perhaps one of the most crucial and key leadership objectives. As a successful leader, you should strive to understand your employees well enough and try to achieve the best to bring the best in them. This will need strong interpersonal skills of mingling socially with your employees.

A perfect leader will make every attempt to make the employees apply themselves completely out of their own will into the common objective of the organization. You should be focused on understanding the learning skills and aptitude of each of the employees and fostering their skills in a more positive manner.

Productivity of Female Employee

Female employee productivity (sometimes referred to as workforce productivity) is an assessment of the efficiency of a worker or group of workers. Employee productivity is the engine on which a business runs. The more efficient your staffs, the faster the turnaround and the healthier your margins. Employee productivity is the responsibility of the manager as well

as the staff. A manager's team should feel secure, motivated and supported, which in turn should lead to greater productivity. And, like every managerial discipline, the field of employee productivity is constantly evolving. Productivity may be evaluated in terms of the output of an employee in a specific period of time. Typically, the productivity of a given worker will be assessed relative to an average for employees doing similar work. Because much of the success of any organization relies upon the productivity of its workforce, employee productivity is an important consideration for businesses. Employee performance is defined as how an employee fulfills their job duties and executes their required tasks. It refers to the effectiveness, quality, and efficiency of their output. Performance also contributes to our assessment of how valuable an employee is to the organization.

Transformative Leadership

Transformational leadership is a model of leadership used across the spectrum of politics, education, entertainment, finance, technology, and other industries. "When you look at people that are good examples of transformational leaders, you think of the people that have had an impact, whether that's on an organization or on the country," Stein says. "These are the people that can rise to any challenge and bring everybody together collectively to make a difference." This transformational approach to leadership relies on encouraging and motivating followers to participate in molding a successful future for an organization. This often includes establishing a group's common purpose—a concept rooted in an organization's official "vision" and "mission," which are two aspects leaders use to help define and outline goals. As Stein explains, "[Vision] tells me where I want my organization to be in the future and why. [Mission] explains the reason for my organization's existence—its purpose." He argues that no organization can succeed without a clear vision and mission and that both are vital aspects for leadership to establish early on. Transforming leaders are idealized in the sense that they are a moral exemplar of working towards the benefit of the team, organization and/or community.

Knowledge Sharing Leadership

Knowledge sharing is the basic means through which employees can commonly exchange their knowledge and contribute to innovation (Wang and Noe, 2010). Knowledge sharing can transfer individual and team knowledge into organizational knowledge (Wang and Wang, 2012). Effective knowledge management can lead to a competitive advantage as organizations improve creativity, innovation and reputations, which, in turn, increases organizational profits (Wang and Noe, 2010). Knowledge management can be described as Knowledge sharing, shared leadership, the process of knowledge acquisition, organizing knowledge, knowledge leverage knowledge sharing and organizational memory (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2005). Knowledge sharing is a critical component of knowledge management. Knowledge management is generally referred to as the way an organization creates, retains and shares knowledge. Knowledge sharing is the process by which individuals exchange tacit and explicit knowledge in order to create new knowledge (Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). Knowledge sharing can occur between individuals, within teams and across the organization. Research supports the idea that cognitive resources available within a team will be underutilized if knowledge is not shared (Argote, 2009). Therefore, knowledge sharing is a critical team process that involves members interacting to share ideas, information, and suggestions relevant to the team's task at hand (Srivastava, Bartol & Locke, 2006).

Knowledge Sharing and Productivity of Female Employee

Knowledge sharing in teams has been found to lead to superior team performance (Srivastava et al. 2006). This has been shown in different settings such as new product development teams (Madhavan and Grover, 2009), research and development teams (Bain et al., 2005) and software development teams (Faraj and Sproull, 2000). Over the past 15 years, research into knowledge sharing in teams has identified a variety of determinants including personality traits (Kurt et al., 2008), team communication styles and knowledge sharing attitudes (deVries et al., 2006), interpersonal familiarity (Gruenfeld et al., 2010), structural diversity (Cummings, 2004) and diversity of team member expertise (Stasser et al., 2000), and small team size (Stasser and Stewart, 2002). Of the determining factors, leadership has shown a particularly strong influence on team knowledge sharing (Politis, 2001; Srivastava et al., 2006). Trust, because it underpins a willingness to communicate, is also critical for knowledge sharing in teams (Mooradian et al., 2006). Currently, there is little empirical research on the specific pathways by which leadership and trust together affect knowledge sharing in teams. Knowledge sharing is defined in this study as the exchange of explicit and tacit knowledge relevant to the team task. This definition is similar to Hansen and Hass's (2007) description of knowledge sharing as the provision or receipt of technical information, know-how and skills. Knowledge sharing involves interaction and communication among team members (Cohen and Bailey, 2005) and includes the implicit coordination of expertise or information about who knows what in the group (Faraj and Sproull, 2000).

Methods

Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The area of study is Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. The population of the study comprised of all civil servants in Akwa Ibom state. A stratified sampling technique was used to select 264 civil servants from the study area and these gave the sample size of 264 respondents. The Main Instrument used in this study was a questionnaire titled "Innovative Leadership and productivity of Female Employees Questionnaire" (ILPFEQ). Face and content validation of the instrument was carried out to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy of study under consideration. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.88 and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics and simple regression. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

Results

Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. In order to test the hypothesis, regression analysis was performed on the data, (see table 1 below).

TABLE 1: Regression Analysis of the influence of Transformational Leadership Style of the Leaders on Female Employee Productivity in Akwa Ibom State

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.76	0.58	0.58	1.29	0.58

*Significant at 0.05 level; df= 262; N= 264; critical R-value = 0.139

The table shows that the calculated R-value 0.76 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.139 at 0.5 alpha levels with 262 degree of freedom. The R-Square value of 0.58 predicts 58% of the influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. This rate of percentage is moderately positive and therefore means that there is significant influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. It was also deemed necessary to find out the influence of the variance of each class of independent variable as responded by each respondent (see table 2)

Table 2: Analysis of variance of the influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	593.29	1	593.29	357.17	.000 ^b
Residual	435.20	262	1.66		
Total	1028.49	263			

a. Dependent Variable: Female Employee Productivity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership

The above table 2 presents the calculated F-value as (357.17) and the critical f-value as (.000^b). Being that the critical f-value (.000^b) is below the probability level of 0.05, the result therefore means that there is significant influence exerted by the independent variables (Transformational Leadership) on the dependent variable which is Female Employee Productivity. The result therefore means that there is significant influence of transformational leadership style of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. The result therefore is in agreement with the research findings of Judge and Piccolo (2004) who noted that transformational leadership, generally considered as a desirable leadership style that has positive effects on various performance outcomes of employees. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative was accepted.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of participatory democracy leadership of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. In order to test the hypothesis, regression analysis was also performed on the data, (see table 3).

TABLE 3: Regression Analysis of the influence of participatory democracy leadership of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State.

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.63	0.40	0.39	1.53	0.40

***Significant at 0.05 level; df= 262; N= 264; critical R-value = 0.139**

The table shows that the calculated R-value 0.63 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.139 at 0.5 alpha levels with 262 degree of freedom. The R-Square value of 0.40 predicts 40% of the influence of participatory democracy leadership of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. This rate of percentage is moderately weak and therefore means that there is low significant influence of participatory democracy leadership of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State. It was also deemed

necessary to find out the influence of the variance of each class of independent variable as responded by each respondent (see table 4)

Table 4: Analysis of variance of the influence of participatory democracy leadership of the leaders on female employee productivity in Akwa Ibom State

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	411.49	1	411.49	174.74	.000 ^b
Residual	616.99	262	2.36		
Total	1028.49	263			

a. Dependent Variable: Female Employee Productivity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Participatory Democracy

The above table 4 presents the calculated F-value as (174.74) and the critical f-value as (.000^b). Being that the critical f-value (.000^b) is below the probability level of 0.05, the result therefore means that there is significant influence exerted by the independent variables (Participatory Democracy) on the dependent variable which is Female Employee Productivity. The result therefore is cognate to the research findings of Clement and Mjoli (2013) who pointed out that participatory democracy increases quality of decision-making, contribute to quality of employees work life, promotes employees' motivation to work, increases employees' satisfaction and organizational commitment. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative was accepted.

Conclusion

The study concluded that transformational approach to leadership relies on encouraging and motivating followers to participate in molding a successful future for an organization. Also that for the effectiveness, quality, and efficiency of the output, Performance contributes to the assessment of how valuable an employee is to the organization. A perfect leader will make every attempt to make the employees apply themselves completely out of their own will into the common objective of the organization. Finally, 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.

Recommendations

1. The employer of the organization should create good working relationship with their employee by motivating them, therefore leading to the positive organizational output.
2. As a leader, one should be focused on understanding the learning skills and aptitude of each of the employees as well as fostering their skills in a more positive manner.

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