

Impact of Leadership Styles and Qualities on Project Lifecycle

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Abstract

Leadership is a function of management and the major determinant of project success or failure. This study employs a positivist epistemological positioning approach to capture the perceptions of stakeholders in the geo-political zones of Nigeria. In all, 240 survey questionnaires were administered to the randomly selected samples of project stakeholders, out of which 180 completed and usable questionnaires (representing 75% response) were retrieved. Secondary data were collected through a systematic review of relevant scholarly publications. Descriptive statistical (Relative Importance Index, RII) tool was used along with SPSS version 26 for primary data analysis. Findings of the study revealed that every leadership style has its impact on the climate of the project and project lifecycle, hence there is no single 'best' style of project leadership. Furthermore, empirical results of the study identified integrity, technical expertise, communication, problem-solving, negotiation, risk management, decision making, goal setting, delegation, and team building as major project leadership qualities. Therefore, this study strongly recommends that project leaders should develop and strengthen leadership qualities in order to successfully complete projects and meet stakeholders' expectations.

Keywords: Leadership qualities, Leadership styles, project lifecycle, project stakeholders

1. Introduction

Throughout history, leadership has been recognised as the major determinant of groups success and failure, whether in war, business, protest movement, regimental and political governance. Leadership means different things to different people, hence there is no one-size-fits-all definition of leadership. A common but broad definition claims that leadership is the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals [1]. The source of this influence may be formal and informal. Influence can come from anyone at any level and in any role. Leadership may be a social influence process in which a leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organisational objectives. Leadership is the behaviour that brings the future to the present, by envisioning the possible, and persuading others to help make it a reality [2].

A leader is a servant, a person who takes someone to where that individual will not go alone.

The functions of a leader may include:

- Establishing a clear vision
- Sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly (without force or coercion)
- Providing information, knowledge and methods to realise that vision.
- Co-ordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders

From the foregoing, leadership can be described as the art of serving others by equipping them with training, tools and resources as well as time, energy and emotional intelligence, so that they can realise their full potentials personally, professionally, physically and spiritually.

The importance of leadership in project delivery cannot be over-emphasised. A project is a temporary endeavour undertaken in order to create a unique product, service or result [3]. A project could be likened to a living organism that passes through the stages of conception, birth, growth and end-product. It is structured in such a way that tangible deliverables are accomplished and visible from the beginning to the end [4, 5]. In this regard, a project is usually divided into project initiation, project design, project execution, project monitoring and control, and project closure. These series of phases constitute and define the project lifecycle. Typical examples of projects, the role of various project stakeholders, and the activities in the different phases of the project lifecycle have been expounded [4, 6]. This paper begins by explaining the concept of leadership, differences between leadership and management, and a critical exposition of leadership styles. A description of the research design is given, followed by the presentation of results and, finally, the discussion of findings and conclusion.

2. Leadership and Management

Leadership is the process of influencing for the purpose of achieving shared goals, while management is a process of planning, organising, coordinating, directing and controlling the activities of others [3]. Management positions are accompanied by certain degree of formally designated authority. Thus, a person may assume a leadership role by virtue of the position occupied in an organisation. Leadership is a basic function of

management, however, not all leaders are managers (see Table 1).

Table 1. Differences between Managers and Leaders

Managers	Leaders
Have subordinates	Have followers
Drive/task-oriented	Influence
Administer	Innovate
Cope with complexity	Cope with change
Maintain	Develop/Create
Passive player	Active player
Control	Inspire
Enjoy stability and predictability	Embrace chaos
Have short term view	Have long term view
Focus on procedures	Focus on policy
Ask how and when	Ask what and why
Focus on goals and objectives	Focus on vision
Imitate	Originate
Conform/Accept the status quo	Challenge the status quo
Do things right	Do the right things
Have little or no tolerance	Have high tolerance
Rigid	Flexible
Focus on systems, resources and structure	Focus on people and human nature

(Authors' fieldwork)

Leaders and managers differ in motivation, personal history, and how they think and act in a social situation. Managers tend to adopt impersonal and passive attitudes towards goals; whereas leaders take a personal and active attitude towards goals.

Management focusses on tasks and is primarily concerned with consistently producing key results while leadership focusses on persons-human capacity development [7]. Leadership entails more than wielding power and exercising authority. Leadership connotes vision, cheerleading, enthusiasm, love, trust, passion, obsession, consistency and effective coaching.

3. Leadership Styles

There are different methods of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people in work environments. These include:

3.1. Authoritarian leader

All decision-making powers are centralised in an autocratic, coercive and commanding leader. This leader makes decisions without taking suggestions from the subordinates. Here, directives and strategies are carried out with absolute focus, while employees

are expected to adhere to decisions at a time and pace stipulated by the leader [2]. An authoritarian leader is strict and keeps close control and regulation of policies, and procedures given to followers. Here, the leader creates and maintains a distinct professional relationship with the followers. An authoritarian leader believes that direct supervision is the key to maintain a successful work environment and followership [8]. The leader engages primarily in one-way and downward communication, controls discussion, dishes out instructions, censors contributions and dominates interactions. Employees cannot question their leaders' way of doing things. The team cannot advance their views even if best for the team or organisational interests.

Given that it permits quick decision-making, authoritarian leadership is capable of lowering morale and frustrating creative-problem-solving ability. An authoritarian leader may create a climate of fear where there is little or no room for dialogue or complains. Other challenges of this style include intimidation, conflict among subordinates, micromanagement, and over-reliance on a single leader.

3.2. Democratic leader

A democratic, participative or facilitative leader makes decisions based on the input of each team member. In other words, every member of the project team has equal say in a project's direction. A democratic leader promotes the interests of group members, shares the decision-making process with them, thus promoting social equality [9, 10]. The leader engages in discussion, debate, sharing ideas, and encourages members to feel good about their involvement. A democratic leader believes that everyone by virtue of human status should play a part in group decisions. Democratic leadership style allows lower-level employees to exercise the authority they will need to use wisely in future positions. It improves job satisfaction, develops positive attitudes and reduces resistance to change.

Democratic leadership creates higher productivity, better contributions from group members, and increases group morale [5]. It can generate better ideas and provide more creative solutions to problems. A democratic leader multiplies abilities through the contributions of followers. However, where roles are unclear and time is of essence, democratic leadership can lead to communication failures and uncompleted projects. A lot of time may be required to allow people to contribute, develop plan and vote on the best course of action.

This style works best in situations where group members are skilled and eager to share their knowledge. The process of reaching a consensus takes considerable time, resources, and communication. Democratic leadership may affect

decision-making in a situation where some team members do not have the right expertise to make critical decisions.

3.3. Paternalistic leader

A paternalistic leader acts as a father-figure by taking care of subordinates as a parent would. The leader demonstrates complete concern for the followers or workers and enjoys absolute trust and loyalty of the people [8]. Paternalistic followers are expected to be totally committed to what the leader believes and will not strive off and work independently. The relationship between the leader and followers is very cordial. The followers often stay with their leader for a very long period of time because of the loyalty and trust. Here, everyone treats another like a family inside and outside the workforce. Both the leader and followers discuss emanating issues, problems and challenges freely with each other.

The paternalistic leader allows workers to complete tasks, encourages them to stay on top of their work, boosts their self-confidence and makes them achieve and exceed goals [1]. This style may introduce a reward system and equip workers with better organisational skills.

3.4. Laissez-faire leader

The French term 'laissez-faire' literally translates to 'let them do'. A laissez-faire, delegative or free reign leader allows the followers to have complete rights, power and freedom to make decisions concerning every task or project [11]. It is often referred to as a 'hands off' leadership because the leader delegates all tasks to the followers with little or no direction. This style gives followers a high degree of autonomy and self-rule, while at the same time offering guidance and support when requested [12]. Here, the leader may provide the followers with all the materials necessary to accomplish the desired goals, but does not directly participate in decision-making, unless the followers request for assistance.

Laissez-faire leadership creates a more relaxed organisational culture. It gives many employees an incentive to do their best work. It is a good style for creative business such as product design, advertisement agency, etc.

This leadership method can be effective when:

- Team members are highly skilled, experienced and educated.
- Followers have pride in their work and possess the drive to do it successfully on their own. Each employee is accountable for individual work.
- Experts, specialists or consultants are employed.
- Followers are trustworthy and experienced.

However, it is not suitable for new or inexperienced employees. Subordinates may move in different directions and may work at cross purpose thereby degenerating into chaos. Laissez-faire leadership can limit team development and lead to overlooking critical organisational growth opportunities.

3.5. Transactional leader

A transactional leader focuses on motivating followers through a system of rewards and punishments [13]. For example, a marketing team receives a schedule bonus for helping to generate a certain number of sales within a specified period. This is a leadership style which assumes that teams need structure and monitoring in order to meet business goals. It is popular in enterprise companies, and focuses on results, existing structures, set systems of reward or penalties, and commitment. This method is based on contingent reward and management-by-exception [2]. Contingent reward provides psychological or material rewards for effort and recognises good performance. Management-by-exception allows a leader to maintain the status quo. The leader intervenes when the subordinates deviate from course or do not meet acceptable performance levels. In such a situation, the leader initiates corrective action to improve performance.

This system helps to reduce the workload of managers. A transactional leader identifies the needs of the followers and gives rewards to satisfy those needs in exchange for a certain level of performance. Transactional leaders focus on increasing the efficiency of established routines and procedures [5]. They are more concerned with following existing rules rather than affecting organisational changes. However, a transactional leader is less concerned about relationships. Thus, it may be difficult to keep a diverse team engaged. This leadership style can lead to low creativity and fear of punishment.

3.6. Transformational leader

A transformational leader inspires followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organisation, and is capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on the followers. A transformational leader challenges and inspires the followers with a sense of purpose and excitement [2]. The goal here is to change or transform the followers' needs and redirect their thinking. Employees might have a basic set of tasks and goals that they complete every week or month, but the leader is constantly pushing them outside of their comfort zone.

The transformational method is a charismatic leadership style which has a broad knowledge of field, a self-promoting personality, high/great energy

level, and the zeal to take risk and use irregular strategies in order to stimulate followers to think independently [14]. Transformational leadership is characterised by intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. The leader can inspire the team to think in new ways. This model can help companies update business processes to improve productivity and profitability. It can also help with employee satisfaction, morale and motivation. It is a highly encouraged form of leadership among growth-minded organisations. However, a transformational leader can risk losing sight of everyone's individual learning curves. Employee burnout can also be an issue, hence it's important to work with team to update benchmarks.

3.7. Strategic leader

A strategic leader sits between a company's main operations and its growth opportunities [12]. This style requires vision, competitive awareness, and adaptability. The leader accepts the burden of executive interests, and also ensures that current working conditions are stable for everyone else. Strategic leaders tie plans for growth and strategy to the way they manage a team [8]. They ask questions, develop and execute strategies, and consider future growth. This style supports popular business goals such as accountability, productivity, collaboration, transparency, etc. It encourages visualisation, planning, making the most of existing resources, and can motivate employees. However, strategic leaders risk thinking too far into the future while missing critical present-day-issues. Learning how to delegate is essential, as well as sharing the weight of decision-making. Yet, compromise, communication skills, and consistent outreach are also important.

3.8. Coaching leader

A coaching or conscious leader focuses on identifying and nurturing the individual strengths of each member of the team [11]. The leader also focuses on strategies that will enable the team to work better together. This style offers strong similarities to strategic and democratic leadership, but emphasises more on the growth and success of individual employees.

A coaching leader might help employees improve on their strengths by giving them new tasks to try, offering guidance, and meeting to discuss constructive feedback. The leader might also encourage one or more team members to expand on their strengths by learning new skills from other team mates. Coaching leaders actively support skill development and independent problem-solving [14]. Ambitious business goals are met by creating a strong organisational culture. They add to the long-term vision of a business as valuable mentors, often

even after leaving an establishment. The leader recognises that each employee is unique, and builds diverse and exciting teams where each employee offers something different.

Coaching leadership focuses on high performance, with employees that can communicate well and embrace unique skill sets to get work done. However, this style takes time and patience, and it may not work with every organisational culture.

3.9. Pacesetter leader

A pacesetter leader is often a perfectionist who sets ambitious standards and expects employees to exceed goals with limited guidance [1]. The leader motivates by working alongside the team, pushing performance, expecting to exceed expectations, and often achieves ambitious goals with clear and focused effort. Skilled and experienced teams often thrive under this kind of leader. The leader leverages on the abilities of motivated and competent team members and makes the achievement of goals urgent and exciting [15]. It can be gratifying for team members to see their leader working hard alongside with them. However, the leader can sometimes create a high-stress workplace environment. Furthermore, unrealistic goals can overwhelm and demotivate the team. This combination can impact engagement and lead to burnout.

3.10. Bureaucratic leader

A bureaucratic leader follows the rules [11]. The leader might listen and consider the initiatives of employees, but rejects an employees' suggestion if it conflicts with organisational policy or practices. This leadership style is common in large, old or traditional establishments [9]. The leader may reject ideas that appear new or non-traditional in order to maintain existing business model and processes. The resistance might be because the firm is successful with current processes. It could also be because trying something new could waste time or resources if it doesn't work.

This model lowers the risk of favouritism and replaces it with central duties, job security, and predictability [3]. It can lead to high levels of creativity for some employees. However, this approach can quickly shut down innovation. It may not be a right fit for companies that are chasing ambitious goals and quick growth.

3.11. Situational leader

A situational leader is a great communicator who uses constant team feedback to make decisions [12]. The leader quickly evaluates and updates processes to enable success, and changes management style to meet the needs of the situation or team. This

leadership model is proactive and recognises that change is the only constant [2]. The approach can motivate employees, and help to anticipate business issues before they happen. It is useful in start-ups or other businesses that make frequent changes and need flexible talent and support. This style creates strong relationships and helps employees see and feel their value to the business. However, a situational leader needs a high level of expertise in all business processes and functions to make decisions. It can also be confusing and stressful for teams if a leader's approach changes too often. It is important to remember long-term goals as well as meet immediate needs, and not every leader can do this effectively.

3.12. Visionary leader

A visionary leader offers vision statements and other tools to inspire and motivate teams to engage at work [5]. The leader focuses on the future, encourages collaboration, emotional intelligence, and teamwork. A visionary leader is a powerful and persuasive communicator who can create a clear plan for inspired employees to follow and execute. The leader has the ability to energise teams towards impactful business growth [14].

Given that inspiration might be difficult to structure, the leader might miss crucial details, skip over day-to-day issues and focus only on long-term ideas. Another possible challenge is hyper-focus on a single goal, when other goals may be just as valuable to the business.

4. Research Methods

This study employs a positivist epistemological positioning approach to capture the perceptions of stakeholders in the geo-political zones of Nigeria. In all, 240 survey questionnaires were administered to the randomly selected samples of project stakeholders, out of which 180 completed and usable questionnaires (representing 75% response) were retrieved. Secondary data were collected through a systematic review of relevant scholarly publications. Descriptive statistical (Relative Importance Index, RII) tool was used along with SPSS version 26 for primary data analysis.

Results from Table 2 indicate that the respondents to this study are relevant stakeholders in project initiation, planning, design, execution, monitoring, control and closure. Project stakeholders are individuals and organisations that are actively involved in projects, or whose interests may be affected as a result of project execution or completion [3].

About 90% of the respondents have more than 10years post-qualification experience in employment and practice. These respondents are samples

randomly selected and representatives of the stakeholders in the project leadership process.

Table 2. Respondents' characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Project Coordinator/Manager	40	22.2
Project Client/User	34	18.9
Project Designer	36	20
Project Constructor	38	21.1
Public Authority and Agency	32	17.8
Total	180	100

The underlying assumption that they are competent, experienced and capable of exercising sound judgement is met. Therefore, the conclusions which would be derived from the results of this study will apply to the entire stakeholders in project leadership process [16].

5. Finding and Discussion

Results from Table 3 show that all the project leadership variables rank very high. Empirical results from this study (see Table 3) reveal that 'project leadership requires the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities (RII = 0.986)'. This implies that the project leader must be able to plan projects, breakdown activities into manageable milestones, delegate tasks, meet deadlines, and control project outcomes.

Effective project leadership involves managing a much more complex and expansive set of interfaces with different groups of stakeholders [3]. The project leaders' role is one of the most challenging jobs in any organisation, because it requires broad understanding of the various areas that must be co-ordinated and requires strong interpersonal skills. The web of relationships with stakeholders and interested parties requires exceptional leadership skills to build trust, communicate, organise, and inspire. In this regard, all the stakeholders in this study recognise the importance of project leadership (see Table 3). Furthermore, most respondents posited that it is much easier to have a leader who is a good manager than to have a manager who is a good leader.

A project manager is a project leader. A manager with excellent project leadership skills builds agreement and cohesion through the project team, and carries out day-to-day team management [4]. Team leadership on projects involves creating an environment for everyone to excel. Project leaders are responsible for the overall success and vision for projects.

Table 3. Relative Importance Index results for project leadership skills/qualities

Project leadership skills/qualities	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	NO 0	RII	Rank
A project coordinator/manager is a leader.	119	61	0	0	0	0.915	27
A project leader must possess sound technical know-how.	155	25	0	0	0	0.965	17
Project leadership requires the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities.	170	10	0	0	0	0.986	1
Good communication skills are required for managing project activities, information and decisions.	150	30	0	0	0	0.958	18
Project policy, objectives and information must be disclosed and communicated clearly to stakeholders.	160	20	0	0	0	0.972	10
The success of a project relies on the right people having the right information at the right time.	165	15	0	0	0	0.979	4
Uncertainties may have either positive or negative effects on the progress and objectives of projects.	100	80	0	0	0	0.888	33
Projects are prone to financial, strategic and performance risks.	120	60	0	0	0	0.916	26
Project risks must be shared according to the capacities of the parties.	160	20	0	0	0	0.972	10
Project success hinges on identifying, understanding and overcoming obstacles.	168	12	0	0	0	0.983	2
It is proper to weigh the pros and cons of available project information before taking any decision.	130	50	0	0	0	0.930	22
Project issues must be analysed and evaluated objectively.	165	15	0	0	0	0.979	4
Time is a resource and a constraint to projects.	140	40	0	0	0	0.944	20
Effective project time management improves productivity	158	22	0	0	0	0.969	14
A project leader must be able to translate project ideas into a workable plan of action.	161	19	0	0	0	0.973	9
A project leader must be able to predict and address any problems, difficulties or challenges that may arise during the project period.	159	21	0	0	0	0.970	13
Project procurement must be transparent and competitive in order to sustain confidence.	156	24	0	0	0	0.966	16
Respect for the sanctity of contracts is sacrosanct.	118	62	0	0	0	0.913	28
Project stakeholders must observe commonly agreed principles and standards of responsible business conduct.	100	80	0	0	0	0.888	33
Public authorities (government) need to adopt effective measures to detect, discourage and penalise corruption.	110	70	0	0	0	0.902	31
A project leader must be honest and have strong, moral and ethical principles.	150	30	0	0	0	0.958	18
A project leader must render stewardship account.	123	57	0	0	0	0.920	25
A project leader must accept responsibility for his activities and disclose results in a transparent manner.	98	82	0	0	0	0.886	37
A project leader must create an enabling environment for projects to succeed.	165	15	0	0	0	0.979	4
Team building helps a work group to evolve into a cohesive unit	96	84	0	0	0	0.883	38
Collaboration enhances social relations, and defines roles within teams	99	81	0	0	0	0.887	36
Synergy improves efficiency and performance of	82	98	0	0	0	0.863	41

workgroups.

Team building helps team members to understand each other better.	90	90	0	0	0	0.875	40
A team that works well together is more effective, productive and successful.	100	80	0	0	0	0.888	33
Project stakeholders must participate in projects in good faith and fulfil contractual commitments.	168	12	0	0	0	0.983	2
Project team members should be able to understand and share the feelings of each other.	118	62	0	0	0	0.913	28
A project leader must understand and identify with the feelings of the members of his team.	109	71	0	0	0	0.901	32
Project team members need to be motivated in order to work together.	111	69	0	0	0	0.904	30
A project leader must motivate his team in order to achieve project objectives.	162	18	0	0	0	0.975	8
Negotiation skills are required for resolving differences between project stakeholders.	140	40	0	0	0	0.944	20
Attitudes, knowledge and interpersonal skills are essential elements for effective negotiation.	130	50	0	0	0	0.930	22
The ultimate goal of negotiation is to arrive at a win-win outcome.	125	55	0	0	0	0.923	24
A paradigm shift from loose-loose relationship to win-win relationship is desirable in projects.	158	22	0	0	0	0.969	14
Conflict resolution process involves mediation, arbitration and conciliation.	95	85	0	0	0	0.881	39
Project tasks must be delegated to team-members with the necessary skills and experience.	164	16	0	0	0	0.977	7
A project leader needs to multitask without sacrificing the quality of work.	160	20	0	0	0	0.972	10

Key: RII = Relative Importance Index, NO = No Opinion, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

$$RII = \frac{1}{4n} [\sum_{i=0}^4 W_i x f_i]$$

Where W_i is weight given to i^{th} rating; $i = 0, 1, 2, 3$ or 4 , f_i = response frequency of the i^{th} rating; and n = total number of response.

The vision of the project leader guides the project team in what should be done and how they should be done. A good leader can make a success of a weak business plan, but a poor leader can ruin even the best project plan.

Leadership styles differ, but at the core, good leaders make their followers accomplish more than they otherwise would, without fear, intimidation or title, but rather by building consensus around a common goal. Leadership connotes the ability of an individual to influence others [1]. The influence is exercised in order to change the behaviour of others. Change in behaviour is caused with the objective of achieving a shared goal. The person influencing others (leader) is expected to possess a set of qualities or characteristics which can influence others. The leadership skills and qualities identified by this study are integrity, shared vision, competence/technical expertise, accountability, multi-tasking, positive self-image, risk management, negotiation, goal setting, delegation, motivation, innovative ideas, problem-solving, effective

communication, strategy, team building, and strong decision making (see Table 3).

A leader is an individual who sets the tone, motivates, inspires, influences, thinks big and never gives up when others feel like quitting [8], [7]. Leadership requires knowing when to be in front to lead and guide a team during a journey, and when to step back and allow followers to grow/develop.

This study critically exposed diverse project leadership styles. A leadership style refers to a leaders' methods and behaviours when directing, motivating, and managing others. A person's leadership style also determines the strategy for implementing project plans, while accounting for the expectations of stakeholders and the well-being of the project team.

Findings of this investigation revealed that each leadership style has its impact on the climate of the project and the project lifecycle, hence there is no single 'best' style of project leadership. Consequently, effective leadership skills must be

deployed over the entire project lifecycle (see Table 4).

Table 4. Leadership style in project lifecycle

Phase	Major attributes/Emphases	Leadership Style/Blend
Project Initiation	Sense of vision 'Big picture' (conceptual) Analysis	Visionary Creates future Empowerment Expansive
Project Design	Listening Analysis Alignment	Analytical Listener Change master Convergence
Project Execution	Participative/ Acceptance and Commitment. Cooperative	Team builder Power and influence Integrator
Project Monitoring and Control	Re-alignment	Decision maker Balances work and fun Trustworthiness Team and Synergy
Project Closure	Transfer of product and information	Administrator Closure

The project leader is often asked to explore what is possible and to define a high-level plan with an indication of project costs. This is very much about making a contribution by meeting others needs and removing their barriers. At project initiation phase, the project manager must be a servant leader.

The project leader must take ownership and be task-oriented towards project design/planning. The leader must engage key stakeholders in a democratic, participative style, and identify the right people for the right role. Furthermore, the project control mechanisms and standards for the project team must be bureaucratically established.

The project leader must manage effective meetings and focus on people-orientation to ensure that awareness, engagement, and positive support is built with a wider set of stakeholders. The leader should consult with others as the need arises for decision-making using autocratic or democratic approaches. The project leader should understand the impact of changes and lead by example with a clear view of the transformation required and engage people with that vision.

The project leader must focus on task-orientation and allow the project team to get things done. The leader must ensure that multiple tasks, priorities and risks are effectively managed and clearly communicated. Furthermore, the project leader should apply the bureaucratic approach to prepare for facility-test, deployment and closure, handling each stage properly by producing appropriate deliverables at the desired level of quality.

Empirical results of this study also uncovered the factors which may affect leadership styles. These include the project task, time, the tradition of an organisation, the type of labour force, the leader's personality and gender.

6. Conclusion

Every project team consists of numerous individuals, each of which has a distinctive personality. Being part of a team and feeling supported by team members is one of the best feelings at work. However, for a team to be productive, it should be happy, and all its members should be able to work together on common goals. There is power in a group of people who work together towards a shared goal. Therefore, a project leader must glue the individuals together to form a formidable project team, spend time with the team, learn about each member's personality and skills. The leader should also know how different team members interact with each other in order to prevent any possible conflicts and handle conflicts when they occur. A project leader must use structure, support and rewards to create a conducive work environment that helps to achieve organisational goals. Project leaders are only as successful as their project teams, hence with the right team dynamics, decisions, and diverse personalities in place, every project stakeholder wins.

A project leader should not only possess the technical know-how or have the right words, but also act as a leader. It is practically impossible to have dedicated and committed team if leadership traits are not demonstrated by the project leader on a daily basis. Therefore, a project leader should be honest with the project team, and behave logically and consistently. A high bar of ethical behaviour should be set, while those who follow same principles should be adequately rewarded. A project leader motivated by self-interest would be a weak leader who may not be able to inspire any team.

Leadership is an integral part of management and plays a vital role in managerial operations. It provides direction, guidance and confidence to the followers and helps organisations in the attainment of goals in much easier way. It acquires dominance and the followers accept the directives and control of a leader. Leadership provides direction and vision for future to an organisation. Simply put, leadership induces individuals to contribute optimally towards the attainment of organisational goals. Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts towards goal achievement in a given situation. Management is science, while leadership is art. It is the art of influencing and inspiring followers to perform their duties willingly, competently and enthusiastically for the achievement of group objectives. Leadership has

the ultimate aim of raising the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led. It transforms potential into reality.

Leadership is a function of knowing self, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust and taking effective action to realise leadership potential. Many people become managers not because they are good leaders but rather because they are technically good at something. Thus, organisations need to have management training programmes that can help people become more effective. Given that there can be so many tasks ongoing at the same time, often with conflicting priorities and timelines, a manager must develop and strengthen project leadership qualities in order to become a valuable asset, ensure successful completion of projects, and meet stakeholders' expectations.

Research findings from this study provide opportunities for critique and further reflection. Whilst empirical data is drawn from the Nigerian context, the data constructs were developed from extant literature. Given the probability sampling technique employed, the results of this study are relevant and practically useful for managers in leadership roles related to projects, programmes, portfolios and businesses.

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