

# Perception of Teacher's on Democratic Leadership Styles of Principal's in Secondary Schools in Sokoto State

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**Abstract:** The study investigated the perceptions of Teachers on Democratic Leadership Style of Principals in Secondary Schools in Sokoto State. The specific objective that guided the study was; to analyze the extent to which secondary school teachers in Sokoto perceive Principals democratic leadership style, the study was basically based on descriptive survey design that employed quantitative method. The total number of population under study was 500. 217 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The sampling techniques were Stratify sampling. Data was collected through questionnaires which were based on four likert scale, 1 for strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree 3 for Agree and 4 Strongly Agree the researchers treating all the research questions one after another using descriptive statistic of a computer program called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data was once again presented in simple percentages and frequency. However, mean scores were used by the researcher to find out the extent of teachers' perception of the principals Democratic leader style. it was found that principals' democratic leadership style are made of Principal allows teachers to participate in determining school resources allocation and utilization, encourage teachers to participate in decision making, consult teachers before making decisions on academic programs and involves teachers in organizing academic activities in the school. Overall, there is high teachers' perception of the principals' democratic leadership style in secondary schools in Sokoto State.

**Keywords:** - Perception of Teachers and Democratic Leadership Style

## I. INTRODUCTION

Democratic leadership style is sometimes called participatory or constructive leadership. According to Owiny (1988), democratic leadership is based on the notion that members of the organization are always involved in setting objectives and policy formulation. In other words, in democratic leadership style decisions are made through consultation (Okumbe, p.12). Democratic leadership style builds trust and respect through commitment. According to Douglas McGregor's (1961) theory 'Y', he argues that a manager in this case the principal believes that people are inherently good and one is willing to accept responsibility for self-direction. The manager/principal stands back, lets employees get onto their different tasks, and acts more as a facilitator, providing loaning and advisory services that they

can achieve the agreed tasks. In this context, principals are regarded as managers and teacher employees. A principal using this leadership style tries to seek compromise in arguments and encourages consensus in decision, gives freedom to members in choosing whoever they want to work with. This style promotes greater group involvement particularly, forestalls conflicts and reduces organizational disharmony, (Maicibi, 2005

Furthermore, the democratic style of leadership emphasizes group and leader participation in the making of policies. Decisions about the organizational matters are arrived at after consultation and communication with various people in the organization. The leaders attempts as much as possible to make each individual feel that he is an important member of the organization. Communication is multidirectional while ideas are exchanged between employees and the leaders (Heenan and Bennis, 1999). In this style of leadership, a high degree of staff morale is always enhanced (Mba, 2004)

### *Theoretical framework*

This study was based on the Contingency theory as propounded by Tannenbaum and Schmidt in 1990. This approach sees leadership as specific to the situation in which it is being exercised. For example, while some situations may require a Democratic style. It also proposes that there may be differences in required leadership styles at different levels in the same organization suggesting the idea that leadership behavior varies along a continuum and that as one move away from the autocratic extreme the amount of subordinate participation and involvement in decision taking increases.

They also suggested that the kind of leadership represented by the democratic extreme of the continuum will be rarely encountered in formal organizations.

(i) *Democratic:* Using this style the leader would characteristically lay the problem before his or her subordinates and invite discussion. The leader's role is that of conference leader, or chair, rather than that of decision taker. He or she will allow the decision to emerge out of the process of group discussion, instead of imposing it on the group as its boss (the Joining style).

This can be achievable based on the leadership styles of secondary school principals. The principals' leadership style has an effect on the learning outcomes of the school. A participative leader, rather than taking autocratic decisions, seeks to involve other people in the process, possibly including subordinates, peers, superiors and other stakeholders.

The research aimed to find out the secondary school teachers perception of the principals Democratic leadership styles in secondary schools in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Principals are important personality in the governance and management of schools in the best interests of the institution and ensure development; promote quality education for all Students in accordance with the standards set by the Act or any other law; Ensure and assure the provision of proper and adequate physical facilities for the school; determine causes of students indiscipline and make a report to the Education Board; facilitate and ensure the provision of guidance and counseling to all learners, encourage the learners, teachers and non-teaching staff and others, parents and community, and other stakeholders to render voluntary services to the institution, amongst others (Sokoto State Ministry of Education, 2012).

Sokoto Education office, (2014) reported that some of the school principals (about 65%) have no experience of leadership, don't have the capacity to work with staff to focus on curriculum and are politically appointed, not qualified. These have raised the poor leadership style among the principals, which must be addressed to ensured quality teachers, remuneration and motivation of teachers.

Studies in relation to this area have been carried out but these studies do not address the problem in this particular location. Therefore the study is meant to address the problem in this particular area.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

*General objective:* The main purpose of the study was to find out the teachers' perception of Democratic leadership styles of Principals in secondary schools in Sokoto State, Nigeria

*Specific objectives:*. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- (i) To analyze the extent to which secondary school teachers in Sokoto perceive Principals democratic leadership style.

#### *Research Questions*

- (i) What is the extent to which secondary school teachers in Sokoto perceive democratic leadership style?

#### *Research Design*

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design. The design was appropriate in this study because the

study was to find out the Democratic leadership styles of principals in Sokoto had already occurred.

#### *Population*

The population of the study is embedded in the 6 secondary schools in Sokoto, These schools are comprised of a total population of 500 teachers. This population was used because the study dealt with teachers from the 6 secondary schools in Sokoto State.

## III. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The researchers used stratified random sampling to select 217 teachers from the six schools. The number of respondents was determined according to Morgan Table for determining random sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) the study focused on Principal, and the major respondents were the teachers. Teachers were considered because they are equally involved in school leadership and management towards performance.

### 3.1 Population, Sample Size and sampling Techniques

Category of participants	Population	Sampling size	Sampling techniques
Teachers	500	217	Stratified Random Sampling
Total	500	217	

Sources: field Study (2020)

#### *Research Instruments*

The researchers used a self- made questionnaires titled Perception of Teachers Principals' Democratic Leadership Style Questionnaire (TPPLSQ). According to Amin (2005), questionnaires are pencil and paper instruments designed to gather data from individuals about their knowledge, attitudes beliefs and feelings. The Questionnaire contained close-ended questions for quantitative data gathering. Questionnaires was preferred because the target populations of teachers were literate and experienced in responding to written questions. The researcher employed a 4 Likert Scale to measure the variables which were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The section A, solicited the bio data of the respondents and section B solicits for Teachers' perception of principals' Democratic leadership style. Scoring of the responses was as follows " SD=1, D=2, A=3 and SA=4)

#### *Validity of the Instrument*

The researchers with the help of experts discussed the questionnaire basing on the Content Valid Index (CVI) which was a scale developed by computing or rating the relevant items in the instrument or questionnaire by checking their clarity, their meaningfulness in line with all objectives stated.

CVI = Relevant items Total = the computed CVI was as follows:  $20/25 = 0.8$

Number of items

*Reliability of the instrument*

As Goy, et al, (2009) state that self-constructed measurement instruments should be pilot tested before use, to determine validity, reliability, and feasibility, the investigator pilot tested the questionnaire in two none participating schools in Sokoto. The researchers used Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to ascertain the internal consistency of the research instrument and the result shown was as follows:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.720	20

This reliability value indicated that the instrument was of high reliability for data Collection.

*Procedure for Data Analysis*

Data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data (Nowak, 1994). The data collected was analyzed by the researchers treating all the research questions one after another using descriptive statistic of a computer program called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data was once again presented in simple percentages and frequency. However, mean scores were used by the researcher to find out the extent of teachers' perception of the principals Democratic leader style.

**IV. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Table 4.1 shows teachers' responses rate that participated in the study:

Table 4.1: Teachers' response rate of the respondents involved in the study

Category of the respondents	Number of questionnaires administered	Number of questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
Teachers	217	217	100
Total	217	217	100

Source: Primary Data (2020)

Table 4.1 shows the teachers' response rate was 100 %. The table further indicates that a total of 217 questionnaires (100%) were distributed to teachers also 217 which constituted of 100% were returned. The researcher was optimistic that the rate of the responses was adequate enough for making necessary generalizations for the study because it has been established that any response rate generated from the questionnaire which was up to the range of 40% and above was adequate for a research

*Research question Two:* What is the extent to which teachers' perceive Principals democratic leadership style in Sokoto North Local Government?

In this element, items of democratic leadership style that were being used by the principals in the schools under the study are described

Table 4.2 indicates whether principals encourage teachers to participate in the schools' decision making

Table 4.2 Showing encouragement of teachers to participate in decision making

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	D	36	18.8	18.8	18.8
	A	55	37.5	37.5	81.2
	SA	126	43.7	43.7	100.0
	Total	217	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data (2020).

Table 4.2 indicated whether principals encourage teachers to participate in the schools' decision making. In the above table, findings indicated that 36 (18.8%) respondents disagreed. However, 55 (37.5%) agreed while 126 (43.7%) strongly agreed. This indicated that majority of the respondents were in agreement that principals encourage teachers to participate in the schools' decision making in the schools under the study.

The finding was supported by Maicibi's, (2005) who stated that a democratic principal stands back, lets employees get onto their different tasks, and acts more as a facilitator, providing loaning and advisory services that they can achieve the agreed tasks.

Table 4.3 indicated whether principals consult teachers in making schools' decisions.

Table 4.3 Showing consultation of teachers before making decisions on academic programs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	18	6.3	6.3	6.3
	D	25	12.5	12.5	18.8
	A	44	18.7	18.7	27.5
	SA	130	62.5	62.5	47.4

Source: Primary Data (2020).

Table 4.3 indicated whether principals consult teachers before making decisions in the schools. The table demonstrates that 18 (6.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 6.3 (12.5%) of them disagreed. This indicated that 18.8% were in disagreement with the statement. Moreover, 44(18.7%) of the respondents agreed while 130 (62.5%) strongly agreed. From the majority of the respondents' views, it could be understood that principals do consult their teachers while or before making decisions in the schools.

This was in agreement with Maicibi's, (2005) who mention that democratic principal do compromise in arguments and encourages consensus in decision, gives freedom to members in choosing whoever they want to work with. This style promotes greater group involvement particularly, forestalls conflicts and reduces organizational disharmony,

Table 4.5 indicated whether principals involve teachers in organizing academic activities in the schools.

Table 4.5 Showing involvement of teachers in organizing academic activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	42	25.0	25.0	25.0
	D	35	12.5	12.5	75.0
	A	140	62.5	62.5	100.0
	SA	217	100.0	100.0	
	Total				

Source: Primary Data (2020).

Table 4.5 from the table, 42 respondents (25.0%) were strongly disagreed that principals involve teachers in organizing academic activities in the schools. However, 35 respondents voted for agreed and 140 (62.5%) were strongly agreed with the statement. This portrayed clearly that 75% of the respondents were in agreements that principals involve teachers in organizing academic activities in the schools.

This was indeed a clear manifestation of the democratic atmosphere of the schools under the study. Furthermore, Heenan and Bennis, (1999) mention that democratic style of leadership emphasizes group and leader participation in the making of policies. Decisions about the organizational matters are arrived at after consultation and communication with various people in the organization.

Table 4.6 indicated whether principals invite teachers in addressing administrative problems in the schools

Table 4.6 Showing invitation of teachers to address administrative problems					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	25	11.5	12.5	12.5
	D	18	5.3	6.3	17.2
	A	68	27.5	37.5	70.3
	SA	106	55.7	43.8	100.0
	Total	217	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data (2020).

Table 4.6 from the table, 25(11.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed, 18 (5.3%) disagreed, 68 (27.5%) agreed and 106 (55.7%) strongly agreed. Based on the findings, it was established that 174 (91.3%) were in agreement position that principals invite teachers in addressing administrative problems in the Schools which was part of the democratization process in the Schools.

This was in agreement with Mba, (2004) who stated that democratic leader keeps his/her employees informed about what is taking place and everything that affects their work, share ideas in decision making and problem solving responsibilities.

Table 4.7 indicated whether principals invite teachers in addressing administrative problems in the schools.

Table 4.7 Showing support of teachers' involvement in designing academic programs					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	44	18.7	18.7	18.8
	D	17	6.3	6.3	25.0
	A	104	50.0	50.0	75.0
	SA	52	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	217	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data (2020).

Table 4.7 indicates that 44 respondents (18.8%) voted for strongly disagree while 17 (6.3%) chose disagree. This indicated that 25.% of the respondents were in disagreement that teachers' involvement in designing academic programs is highly support by the school leadership. However, 104(50.0%) respondents agreed with the statement and 52(25.0%) of the strongly agreed. This manifested that 75% of the respondents were in agreement with the idea that teachers were highly supported to participate in designing schools' academic programs in the schools under the study. This indicated that there were indeed some elements of democracy being practiced by the principals of the schools.

James & Connolly, (2000) who stated that school Principals contended that democracy will be the best leadership strategy for school environments because schools are systems with parts that are interrelated where teachers participate in decision-making because academic progress depends on the quality of teaching exhibited. Today there is a very strong school of thought that schools can no longer be managed by a lone figure at the top of the hierarchy

Table 4.8 below indicated the mean ranking to extent of teachers' perception of the principals democratic leadership style in Sokoto, the result obtained revealed there is moderate teachers' perception of principals democratic leadership style.

Table 4.8: Showing Means ranking to the extent of teachers' perception of principals' democratic leadership style in Sokoto State

Items for teachers (n=217)	Mean	Interpretation	Ranking
Principal encourage teachers to participate in decision making	2.84	High	2
Principal consult teachers before making decisions on academic programs	2.74	Moderate	3
Principal involves teachers in organizing academic activities in the school	2.52	Moderate	6

Principal often invites teachers in addressing administrative problems in the schools	2.50	Moderate	7
Solving administrative problems with fellow staff improves students' academic progress	2.70	Moderate	5
Teacher's involvement in designing academic programs is highly supported	2.72	Moderate	4
Principal allows teachers to participate in determining school resources allocation and utilization	2.98	High	1
Average Mean	2.71	High	

Source: Results of the analysis (2020)

Results in Table 4.8 showed the means ranking to the teachers' perception of principals' democratic leadership style in Sokoto State. It is observed that among the items above Principal allows teachers to participate in determining school resources allocation and utilization (mean of 2.98) is the highest perception. This is followed by Principal encourage teachers to participate in decision making, Principal consult teachers before making decisions on academic programs, Teacher's involvement in designing academic programs is highly supported, Principal involves teachers in organizing academic activities in the school. Overall, there is high teachers' perception of the principals democratic leadership style in secondary schools in Sokoto (with overall mean of 2.71).

The finding was similar to Adeyemi,s (2010) who study on the principals' leadership styles and teachers' Job Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Ondo State, Nigeria who found that the democratic leadership style was the most commonly used leadership style among principals of senior secondary schools in the State.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Based on the data collected, it was found that principals' democratic leadership style are made of Principal allows

teachers to participate in determining school resources allocation and utilization, encourage teachers to participate in decision making, consult teachers before making decisions on academic programs and involves teachers in organizing academic activities in the school. Overall, there is high teachers' perception of the principals' democratic leadership style in secondary schools in Sokoto State (with overall mean of 2.71) (see table 4.8).

#### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since it was found in the result of the study that there was a moderate democratic leadership style of the principals in the schools under the study, the researchers recommends that the principal should ensure that teachers and other members of staff in the schools were involved in a collegial decision making process in the schools so as to make the relationship to be adequately high in respect to the students' academic performance in the schools.

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