# Effective SCHOOL LEADERSHIP in a Disadvantaged Area

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# Dedication

This book is dedicated to my dad, Late Mr. B. B. O. Itaman, who laid the foundation of my education career and interest in leadership, and to all educational leaders and researchers.

# Contents

# Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the Almighty God for the grace and strength bestowed on me to carry out this research work. With a grateful heart, I appreciate the support of my Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus Ogun, the Bishop of Uromi Diocese, in the course my study. Special thanks go to my mother, Mrs. Margaret Itaman, and the entire Itaman family for the support and prayers throughout my studies. In the same way, I thank my friends, Fr. Kelvin Anetor, Ephraim Itaman, Prof. F. I. Okungbowa, Prof. Oyayewo Aluede, Dr. Cheryl Keen, Dr. Katherine Emmons, and all my friends, who generously and meticulously did the proofreading for the success of this book. Finally, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to all who helped me in one way or the other in the process of writing this book.

I ask God to bless you all!
**ITAMAN, THEOPHILUS IDEBANERIA**

# Preface

Researchers have observed that schools and effective leaders are essential to achieving and sustaining high student achievement in disadvantaged poor rural areas. Poor leadership may negatively influence the academic performance of students. The poor performance of students in the disadvantaged rural area has been a continuous concern for educators in Nigeria. The purpose of this book is to explore and gain an understanding of the concept of leadership, leadership practices that a rural school principal implemented to improve the academic standards in a disadvantaged environment in Nigeria. This has become all the more pertinent because among those factors necessary for the survival and improvement of the school system is that of leadership (Huber, 2004; Stoll & Fink, 1996).

This book highlights the importance and impact of leadership training on the effectiveness of the leader. It

establishes the fact that effective leadership is a key in school improvement projects. Hence, the participants maintained that effective leadership is the most important factor and the very key to school improvement.The book further draws a connection between effective leadership and school improvement (Bush, 2003; Harris, 2004; Wallace, 2002), while articulating ways of promoting school improvement apart from having effective leaders. The book suggests that to ensure school improvement, school leaders must focus on students' learning through the appropriate supervision of the teaching and learning process by way of class visits (Stoll & Fink, 1996; Harris et al., 2006).

Most importantly, the information provided in this book will contribute significantly to the body of knowledge in the area of school leadership and school improvement. It develops knowledge in educational leadership in Nigeria by bringing evidence from principals and teachers to establish what it takes to make leadership effective, and in turn, to ensure school improvement. The book also provides useful information for policy makers, educationists, and the Post Primary Education Board in the development and training of educational leaders effectively and efficiently for school improvement.

Finally, this book articulates the pivotal position that effective leadership occupies in the wheel of school improvement. It submits that if the Nation is to achieve her Vision 20:2020 in the education of Nigerians, leadership in schools must be repositioned by producing effective leaders.



# Foreword

Over the years, policy makers have become saddled with the policies that may be evolved not only to make the school a safe haven, but devoid of all forms of social vices, such as examination malpractices, cult activities gang rape, drug, addiction and abuse, etc. On the part of the Managers of the school, concerted efforts are continuously being made on how to enhance academic performance of students and by so doing make the school a centre of excellence.

In their desired efforts to achieve better academic achievements for students especially in their external examinations and related assessments, managers of our schools have often directed their attention towards the enhancement of instructions in schools. As it is generally believed that if students are to do well academically in schools, then, the instructional delivery mechanism must

of necessity be overhauled and become more productive in terms of schools outputs and outcomes, particularly the quality of students' learning and graduation rates. This belief has over time led to the deployment of huge resources for the procurement of books and other resource materials for the school libraries and the training of learning facilitators, through in-service training schemes of our school teachers for greater productivity which can easily be measured by their students' performance in examinations, whether internal or external.

Surprisingly, even with the huge investment in the training and retraining of teachers and the upgrade of instructional facilities, students' academic achievement especially in the relatively recent times seems to still be on a downward dive as epitomized in the continued poor performance of students in most examinations. This very situation has led many scholars to ask what appropriate strategies may be deployed to reverse this trend. A possible solution to this nagging problem may be to direct attention to the quality of leadership in our school system.

Inquiring into and finding the type and quality of leadership that best suits our schools; one which would readily produce the goods irrespective of the disadvantaged nature of the area becomes critical. This is because even with the employment of highly qualified teachers and deployment of the best instructional facilities without highly skilled school managers and right leadership to offer our schools well-articulated vision and provide strategic plan, quality supervision, monitoring,



evaluation appropriate channel of available resources in the schools, the hope of having schools in our environment where higher quality of learning are rigorously pursued and sterling students' academic achievements maximized may still be a dream.

Dr. Theophilus Itaman has in his book provided readers with array of theories, propositions put forward by leading schools in educational management in the quest for a better and functional school system. The book has further provided readers with the fundamentals of leadership and how these tools of leading successful schools may be deployed for the full realization of not only the goals of our school system but raising of the academic achievements levels in places tagged educational disadvantaged areas of our country.

Dr. Theoplilus Itaman being an expert in educational management and school manager himself, has brought to bear, his experience spanning over ten years at Lumen Christ international High School, Uromi that has remained the best performing secondary school in Nigeria.

This book has provided ample tools and pieces of information to unravel what has remained a puzzle to many of us. That is, how do we achieve as better school system, especially in areas perceived as educational disadvantaged where the access and availability of needed resources, both human and otherwise are of a relatively higher challenge, where our students can achieve sterling academic performance and related greater learning

outcomes. The books also assures the governments, religious organizations, local communities and spirited individual that with the right leadership in place in our schools their huge investments in education is not a wasteful venture.

In all, this book offers its readers and the general public a clear condition that for us to achieve better schools, where students can fully realize their potentials especially by having higher levels of academic achievement, search lights must be turned to the type of leadership we offer to our schools. To put it succinctly, the quality of school leadership determines the type of school, the quality of instruction, the nature of the school culture and climate and the competitiveness of the schools' outputs and invariably its outcomes.

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# Chapter One

## The Concept of Leadership

Effective functioning of a social system is assumed to be dependent on the quality of leadership. Hence, the concept of leadership has a social significance; the art of leadership is as old as age itself; its discussion dates back as far as the Bible and Ancient Rome. A basic characteristic of organisations is that they all have leaders who are responsible for leading them to achieve their goals. Indeed, all human organisations,

including the educational systems of the world, irrespective of their size or complexity, are designed to have leaders and followers at every level. Leadership always comes first in every organisation. In stressing the place and relevance of leadership in an organisation, Gronn (2003) provides an interesting metaphor thus "leadership lives in a family with power, authority, influence, manipulation, coercion, and force, with persuasion as a first cousin. As a favourite offspring, none of its siblings command anything like the reverence and respect with which leadership is adorned"(p.60). By this assertion, Gronn is of the opinion that leadership is the most important element in any organisation.

Conceptions of school leadership are highly dynamic, challenged, culturally and historically situated at the hub of ideological and socio-political struggles for the future of our schools. Conceptions of educational leadership are not simply academic constructions for school effectiveness but essentially lexes of political and cultural and values (Grace, 1995). In a bid to cut through and understand this most celebrated, respected, but complex phenomenon that is leadership, people have described it in various ways. Indeed:

> *Decades of academic analysis have given us more than 350 definitions of leadership…never had so many laboured for so long to say so little. Multiple interpretations of leadership exist, each providing a sliver of insight but each remaining an incomplete and wholly inadequate explanation…*
> *(Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 4-5).*



In this changing world that is enveloped in ambiguity and uncertainty, it is hard to be certain that any single definition of leadership will hold good for all (Obi, 2003). This means that there can be no single, all-satisfying definition of leadership because the concept of leadership is complex and it encapsulates variables that make it almost impossible to be captured by any one definition. Consequently, there are as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept; each emphasising one aspect of leadership more than the other. While some definitions of leadership stress the idea of moving forward, as the verb 'lead' implies (Fapojuwo, 2002; Kreitner, 2001) others view leadership as helping or facilitating, with the leader as one who uses his/her skills to aid a person or group of people to attain a goal (Ade, 2003; Bush & Middlewood 1997; Weihrich & Koontz, 2005; Brundrett, 1999; Ojo & Olaniyan, 2008).

In considering the multifaceted nature of leadership, Bennis (1989, p. 18) is of the view that "leadership is like beauty: it is hard to define, but you know it when you see it." However, in attempting to define leadership, some authors have stressed the idea of influencing others, indicating that leadership is the process in which the leader influences the activities of an individual or a group towards goal achievement (Cole, 1986; Fapojuwo, 2002; Kreitner, 2001). As such, a good leader is one who is capable of persuading others to move enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals. A leader enables and assists others in achieving planned goals by organising, directing and influencing them (Bush and Middlewood 1997; Weihrich & Koontz, 2005; Brundrett, 1999; Ojo &

Olaniyan, 2008). This implies that leadership is conceived of as a process, not a position or personality. It is somehow linked to the behaviour of the leader towards the followers in an organisation, directed at achieving a goal in a given situation.

A critical review of the literature indicates some essential components in school leadership that could lead to a detailed understanding of the concept of leadership in school management. Literature suggests that leadership is conceived as a means of exercising influence, as an instrument of goal achievement, a form of persuasion, a process of initiating structure, the outcome of the interaction, the influence of power, and a way of behaviour (Leithword, 2012; Northouse, 2013; Odhiambo & Hii, 2012). In this light, Leithwood (2012, p. 3) describes leadership as "the exercise of influence on organisational members and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organisation's vision and goals." Leadership involves a process of influence over a given group with the purpose of achieving a common goal (Northouse, 2013). In a systematic review of leadership practices that promoted student achievement, Hitt and Tucker (2016) claimed that school leaders are those who mobilise and influence groups (teachers, parents, and students) to achieve school goals (student achievement). Besides, leadership has also been found to be concerned with achieving goals, working with people in a social organisation, being ethical and exercising power (Donaldson, 2006; Odhiambo & Hii, 2012; Horg & Loeb, 2010; Hitt & Tucker, 2016).



In the same way, Ade (2003, p. 15) defines leadership as "a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of the subordinates in an effort to reach organisational objectives." The operative word in the definition of Cole and Ade is 'voluntary,' suggesting that one does not need to rely on power or force to lead others. The implication is that successful leaders need to back up any authority and power vested in them through their attributes and social skills.

Through critical examination, there are three general elements of leadership that may be identified in the various definitions above: First, leadership is related to the *process* of influencing others' behaviour. Secondly, it is related to *goal* development and achievement. Thirdly, it is the art of *influencing* others (Northouse, 2013). Considering the first element, there are many methods to influence followers or other people to work. Based on different perspectives, different approaches may be developed to lead, manage, influence and even to control people and their activities within an educational institution. As for the second element, how to set goals, create meanings, direct actions, eliminate uncertainty or ambiguity and achieve goals, is also a core part of leadership activities in education (Bush & Bell, 2002). Leadership has the function of influencing the performance of organisations positively by affecting the minds and behaviour of the participants. Performance means goal-attainment. Thus, successful leaders are those whose organisations reach their goals. Thirdly, in regards to the art of *influencing* others, influencing may be seen as better than *inducing,* which some definitions used while

defining leadership as the ability to induce compliance in the rest of the group (Townsend, 1994). Most definitions of leadership suggest that it involves social influence over others. For Gronn (2003) leadership is "too immature a sibling to stand on its own feet, for it requires a fellow sibling, influence, to provide support" (p.61). Hence, influence is needed to define leadership. Leadership is a form of direct and indirect influence on the followers (Gronn, 1999; Northouse, 2013). Consequently, the leader is seen as an influential person. Influence means 'significant affecting,' whereby a tangible difference in degree or kind is made to an individual or a group's well-being, interests, attitudes, beliefs, intentions, desires, hopes, policies or behaviour'(Gronn, 1999; Northouse, 2013; Strain et al., undated). Moreover, when followers ascribe leadership, they mentally position themselves in a state of readiness as desiring to be influenced. Thus, they deem the leader's influence to be legitimate, and they do so willingly and freely. Influence, then, seems to be a necessary part of most leadership concepts; types or models of influence can be accounted for by the difference in the person who exerts the influence, the nature of that influence, the purpose for the exercise of influence and its outcomes.

On the other hand, Gardner (1990) maintains that "leadership is the accomplishment of group purpose, which is furthered not only by effective leaders but also by innovators, entrepreneurs, and thinkers; by the availability of resources; by questions of value and social cohesion"(p.38). This definition demurs at the popular notion that leadership exists in a designated person and



situation. It is a move to achieve a set goal, not because of the leader but because of the work of all the members of the group. In all, leadership is concerned with setting and achieving goals, being ethical, working with people and exercising power in a social organisation.

More recently, leadership has come to be seen as a construct that influences the attitudes and behaviour of individuals and also the organisational system in which people work (Northouse, 2013; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Leaders articulate their vision, set clear goals for their organisations, and create a sense of shared mission. Leadership is the ability, either directly or indirectly, to lead people by setting an inspiring example, with the express aim of realising the vision and values of the principal (Williams, 2002). It is the responsibility of the leader to create the vision (Kydd et al., 2003). The principal needs to effectively communicate the vision and its associated values to staff. The leadership team has the task of further communicating this vision to others and putting procedures in place that will help to achieve the set vision. These definitions convey the idea of identifying a future state that is desirable for the organisation and how to improve it.

From these definitions, one may deduce that:

- Leadership is a necessary process of influencing, coordinating and directing the activities of a school or organisation towards achieving set goals.
- Leadership occurs whenever one wishes to influence the behaviour of an individual or a group, regardless of the reason.

- Leadership always involves followership and the situations under which different groups and individuals will follow vary considerably.

This agrees with the review of the literature on the definition of leadership by Peretomode (cited in Ijeoma, 2004), which identifies some aspects of the definition of leadership as:

1. The ability of a leader to motivate and persuade others to work towards achieving a set goals.
2. Interpersonal influence designed for effective communication process.
3. Initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing or changing an organisation's goals.
4. Influencing the actions, behaviours, beliefs, and goals of one person by another with the willing cooperation of the one being influenced.

In analysing these definitions, there is further indication that effective performance in any given situation may depend on the right type of leadership, which enables the leader to co-ordinate the activities of his or her subordinates. This shows that leadership is an integral part of any organisation; as it determines the maintenance, effectiveness, and productivity of complex institutions such as government departments, schools, colleges, and universities. Again, these definitions suggest that leadership is concerned with achieving *goals*, working with *people* in a social *organisation*, being *ethical* and exercising *power (*Northouse, 2013). Further analysis shows that whether a writer is describing leadership or a



leader, definitions inevitably fall into three parts:

1. What the leader does.
2. For or against whom the action is taken.
3. Towards what end the actions are taken.

Most writers adhere to leadership as something that is carried out by an individual, with or for others, towards a specific goal or outcome (Ade, 2003; Gardner, 1990; Northouse, 2013). More recently, a description of leadership in terms of transformational leadership seems more helpful. This leadership involves the process whereby leaders develop followers into leaders. In it, the leader has a developmental plan in her or his head for each follower (Avolio, 2005). This definition is the most progressive of all the descriptions, in that it aims towards the deep transformation or emancipation of those led.

Studying the above definitions and descriptions of leadership, a *leader is one who achieves set goals by working collaboratively with stakeholders and enlisting the efforts of the followers by influencing and motivating them positively to achieve school goals*. This is in line with the view of Sergiovanni (2001) that the "idea of superhero will not work. Success will depend on the ability of the leader to harness the capacity of others" (p. 55).

In examining leadership, Rost (1991) undertook an extensive analysis of influential writers from 1900 through 1990, and found that this picture of leadership was highly consistent in them. He says:

> *Leadership is good management… Leadership is great men and women with certain preferred traits*

> *influencing followers to do what the leaders wish in order to achieve group/organisational goals that reflect excellence defined as some kind of higher- level effectiveness (*p. 180).

Rost (1991) regards this composite definition as the "industrial leadership paradigm," which is hierarchical, individualistic, linear, and mechanical - these ideas are worlds away from the needs of today's schools and societies. Consequently, many, like Peter Block (1996) and Warren Bennis (2000) have called for the abandonment of the word 'leadership.' While Block prefers stewardship, Bennis calls for the total abandonment of what he calls, "archaic baggage that has situated leadership in top-down hierarchical models" (Bennis, 2000, p. 32). Bennis reframes leadership by changing and modifying the distinct qualities of the leader in these ways:

1. The New Leader understands and practices the power of appreciation.
2. They are connoisseurs of talent, more curators than creators.
3. The New leader keeps reminding people of what is important.
4. The New Leader generates and sustains trust.
5. The New Leader and the Led are intimate allies (Bennis, 2000; Lambert et al., 2002, p. 37).

In all, concise definitions and descriptions of leadership are difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at. As Yukl (1994) argues, "Like all constructs in social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no



"correct" definition" (p. 16). It may be noted that lack of attention to definition has been one of the main impediments to progress in the field (Rost, 1991). Indeed, record indicates that over 60 per cent of researchers on leadership since 1910 did not define leadership in their works (Rost, 1991). This is probably because of its complexity. As Duke (cited in Bolam et al., 1993) observes, "*Leadership seems to be a gestalt phenomenon; greater than the sum of its parts"* (p. 45). This shows that leadership is a complex and a contested concept.

In the past five decades, the concept and understanding of leadership have changed from autocratic, dominance, and social control to democratic, collaborative and shared leadership that enlist the effort and skills of others through influence, persuasion, empowerment, and shared responsibilities (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Northouse, 2013). These new approaches are underscored by various leadership theories and styles, and these theories and styles serve as the foundation for the framing of leadership practices and behaviours of school principals (Northouse, 2013; Yusuf, 2012). The description of leadership as a process influenced the change in the concept of leadership as shared, and led to the unique perspective and understanding of leadership as distributed (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Northouse, 2013). In this sense, the principal is not seen as one who provides all leadership functions but as one that shares leadership with teachers and subordinates to enhance effective leadership practice and school success (Gronn, 2008).

School leaders can mobilise all available resources to achieve school goals and student high achievement (Donaldson, 2006). Supporting these findings, Hitt and Tucker (2016) and Smith and Piele (2006) claimed that an understanding of leadership must encapsulate the desired ends of school leadership and of empowering others to serve the needs of the students. In agreement, Donaldson (2006) observed that an effective school leadership mobilises the followers to harness all school practices and beliefs to promote student achievement. This observation suggests that an effective school leader would be one who develops school vision with the followers in line with school goals and values and communicates such visions to the followers with the view of influencing them to achieve school goals and promote school improvement (Hallinger, 2013; Nagy & Fawcett, 2011).

**Nature of Leadership**

In a bid to understand the basic nature of leadership, there is a need to examine the transactions between leaders and followers. Therefore, this section looks at the basic components of leadership. Leadership is seen as a social exchange process which involves three basic elements: the leader, the follower and the situation. This shows that leaders bring to a situation their personalities, motivation, competencies, and legitimacy while followers bring their personalities, expectations, motivations, and competencies (Obi, 2003).

Each situation has its unique characteristics, including the availability of resources, nature of the task, social structure, and rules, physical setting and history. Where these three



elements overlap is where the leader and followers interact within a given situation, and the level of their effectiveness is highest. It means that for a leader to be effective such person must maintain a good relationship with the followers and work collaboratively with the stakeholders to achieve school goals. The idea that leadership is a social action introduces the fact that it involves not simply working with colleagues but striving to accomplish common goals (Northouse, 2013; Southworth, 1998). It is not just an activity by an individual in a social setting, but a social act with others who the leader is trying to influence. In this analysis, the literature indicates that by the nature of leadership, there must be a good relationship between the leader and the led. Considering the nature of leadership, the questions that readily come to mind are: Does the principal alone make the school and do Nigerian principals consider working with the staff as an important element in leadership? These questions become relevant in considering the Nigerian situation where principals are autocratic and always wanting to take decisions alone (Ogunu, 2000; Olagboye, 2004; Obi, 2003).

**Differences between Leadership and Management**

The two terms leadership and management seem to be used interchangeably among Nigerian principals (Olagboye, 2004; Riley & Mulford, 2007). Indeed, leadership often appears to be used as an aspect of management. There is a distinction between leading and managing. Although some managers are leaders and some leaders are managers in their organisations, leading and managing are not identical activities. This agrees with

Kreitner and Kinicki idea (2004) that "leaders manage and managers lead, but the two activities are not synonymous" (p. 596). Some researchers see clear differences between management and leadership. One of the most quoted and most vehement researchers is Kotter (1993), who maintains that a distinction can be made in terms of their (leaders' and managers') functions. As Kotter notes, "strategic development is a key function of leadership for change, while day-to-day problem-solving is a management function" (Sue & Glover, 2000, p.13). In the same light, Everard et al. (2004) and Day et al. (2000) differentiate leading from managing by stressing six fundamental differences thus:

1. A manager administers - a leader innovates
2. A manager maintains - a leader develops
3. A manager focuses on systems and structure - a leader focuses on people.
4. A manager relies on control – a leader inspires trust
5. A manager keeps an eye on the bottom line - a leader has his/her eyes on the horizon
6. A manager does things right – a leader does the right things

Though these authors have stressed the idea of the leader doing the right thing and manager doing things right, they have failed to add how this would be recognised. In picking up the idea of transformational and transactional leadership, Burns, (cited in Teske et al., 1999) says that the transactional is concerned with management, while the transformational is concerned with leading an organization to achieve a set goal. However, many authors



never agree with this list of differences. None-the-less, the differences made by these authors make for a helpful basis for critical discussion on the nature of management and leadership.

It is important to state here that many people have also canvassed for separation between management and leadership. Thus, Schon notes:

> *Leadership and management are not synonymous terms. One can be a leader without being a manager. One can, for example, fulfil many of the symbolic, inspirational, educational and normative functions of a leader…without carrying any of the formal burdens of management. Conversely, one can manage without leading (*cited in Jones & Pound, 2009, p. 8).

Supporting the view that leadership and management are different, Grint (1995) says that, "Leadership is construed as the process of constructing a vision and then cajoling one's subordinates to follow it…; whereas, management … is much more a routine administrative affair" (pp.125-126). This shows that management depends on a formal position of power, whereas leadership stems from social influence processes (Northouse, 2013; Moorhead & Griffin, 1992). In this sense, Kotter (1993) argues that "Management is about coping with complexity…. Leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change" (p. 27). Kotter further advances a reason as to why there are differences in both concepts, namely that the business world has become more competitive and more volatile in recent years. The volatility of this nature demands a range of approaches which are clearly divided into managerial

and leadership roles. For him, managing complexity requires planning and budgeting- setting targets and goals for the future, that is, the manager's roles. In contrast, leading for positive change requires setting the direction, developing people, managing instructional programs, and redesigning the school to achieve the school vision. Bennis (2000) framed Kotter's distinction more pejoratively, namely that leaders master the context and managers succumb to it. Leadership is concerned with constructive or adoptive approaches to change while management is concerned with consistency and order.

Kotter (1990) summarises the differences between leadership and management thus, in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: *The differences between leadership and management*

| LEADERSHIP | MANAGEMENT |
|---|---|
| Establishing Direction | Planning/Budgeting |
| ↓ F gxgrnqr "lwwtg"xkukqp" (often very distant)<br>↓ F gxgrnqr "ej cpi g" strategies to achieve vision | ↓ F gxgrnqr "f gvckngf " steps/timetables for results.<br>↓ Cnnqecvg"pgeguuct{"tguqwtegu |
| Aligning people | Organising/staffing |
| ↓ E qo o wpkecvg"f ktgevkqp" by words and deeds to those whose co-operation is needed.<br>↓ Kphnwgpeg"etgcvkqp"qlh" coalitions/terms that understand and accept vision and strategies | ↓ F gxgrnqr "pgeguuct{"rncppkpi ." staffing, delegation structures<br>↓ Rtqxkf g policies/procedures for guidance and methods/systems for monitoring |



| O qvkxcvkpi 1Kpurkkpi | E qpvtqnkpi 1Rtqdrgo "uqnxkpi |
|---|---|
| ↓ Gpgti kug"vq"qxgteqo g" barriers (e.g. political, resource, bureaucratic) to change by satisfying need | ↓ O qpkqt"tguwnvu'cpf "r ncp"kp" detail<br>↓ Kf gpvkh{"tguwnvu'r ncp"f gxkcvkqpu" and plan and organise to correct |
| Tends to Produce | Tends to produce |
| ↓ Ej cpi g."qhvgp"f tco cvke<br>↓ Rqvgpvkcnn{"hqt"xgt{" useful change (e.g. new products etc.) | ↓ Qtf gt1"r tgf kevcdkrkv{<br>↓ Mg{"tguwnvu'gzr gevgf "d{" stakeholders (e.g. in time, within budget). |

(Adapted from Kotter, 1990, p. 139)

In a similar vein, the literature indicates that management is within the domain of implementation and control, while leadership involves developing a vision and inspiring people to achieve this set vision (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005; Northouse, 2013; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004; Kent et al., 2001). Leadership frequently requires altering the status quo and getting people to commit to the strategy, while management is more closely oriented toward maintaining the status quo (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005).

Research with focus groups in 38 countries reported by House and Aditya (1997) shows that there is a consistent view that leadership and management are different activities. Leadership may be seen as the production and explanation of a vision for the organisation with the introduction of major organisational change, providing inspiration and dealing with 'highly stressful and troublesome aspects of the external environments of

organisations. Managers and leaders are very different kinds of people, and indeed, they differ in motivation, personal history, and how they think and act (Obi, 2003).

Again, Fullan, (1991), Northouse (2013), and Dimmock (2002) maintained that while *leadership* 'relates to mission, direction, and inspiration,' *management* 'involves designing and carrying out plans, getting things done, and working effectively with people.' Moreover, management is concerned with building and maintaining an organisational structure while leadership focuses on building and maintaining an organisational culture (Schein, 1992). It suggests that the significant difference between leaders and managers is that the former create and change cultures, while the latter live with them and work for acceptable compromise (Latchem & Hanna, 2001). Schein stresses that the main focus of leadership is the organisational culture.

In addition, Mullins (2002) applied the 7-s organisational framework to show the differences between management and leadership thus: "managers tend towards reliance on strategy, structure, and system while leaders have an inherent inclination for utilization of the 'soft' Ss of style, staff, skills, and shared goals. Management involves using human, equipment and information resources to achieve various objectives. On the other hand, leadership focuses on getting things done through others."Thus, we manage things, but lead people (Northouse, 2013).

Management may, arguably, be viewed more in terms of planning, directing, organising, and controlling the



activities of the followers. Leadership, however, is concerned more with attention to communicating with, motivating, encouraging and involving people. Dunford et al. (2000) maintain that "leadership is the ability to move the school forward, while management is concerned with the procedures necessary to keep school running"(p. 2). Leadership is concerned with the long term and the strategic, management with the immediate and short term. Managing is much broader in scope than leading, and focuses on behavioural as well as non-behavioural issues, whereas leading emphasises mainly behavioural issues.

In a research conducted with regard to 12 schools in England, Day et al. (2000) presented the view of the respondents thus:

> *Leadership and management must coincide; leadership makes sure that the ship gets to the right place*; *Management makes sure that the ship (crew and cargo) is well run…. Leadership is about getting across to the staff where we are now and where we are going. It is not about the mechanisms by which that vision is achieved-that is management (*p. 37*).*

It suggests that one could link leadership to values or purpose while management relates to the implementation or technical issues (Bush, 2003; 2008).

While efforts have been made to distinguish between a leader and a manager, the fact remains that they overlap in many areas (Bush, 2008). Indeed, many researchers are of the opinion that leadership and management are two sides

of the same coin. This indicates that leadership is, effectively, part of management. This agrees with the view of Sue and Glover, (2000) that the terms tend to be used interchangeably, and that leading is frequently seen as an aspect of management. The nature of educational organisation suggests that it is necessary also for leaders to undertake management activities. A common view is that the job of the manager requires the ability of leadership, and leadership is in effect a sub-set of management (Bush, 2003; Northouse, 2013). An effective principal needs to be both a leader and a manager. This brings out the relevance of the distinction between leadership and management to this study. Hence, Olagboye, (2004) argues that most principals in Nigeria only manage schools and this has contributed to their ineffectiveness. This is in line with the assertion of Bush (2008) that if schools and colleges are to operate effectively and achieve their objective, they must focus on both management and leadership in the organisation. For Bush (2008), while a clear vision is essential to establish the nature and direction of change, it is equally important to ensure that innovations are implemented efficiently, and the school's functions are carried out effectively. Thus, schools need both visionary leadership and effective management. This suggests that these two dimensions have a symbiotic relationship and consequently need to be kept in balance (Brigg, 2003). As Nicholls (1993) notes "Managers who do not lead are failing to fulfil their functions as managers. When lacking its leadership dimension, management is reduced to mere administration" ( p. 73).



Considering the literature, what is obvious is a picture of school leaders who must staff schools, meet pupils' needs, attend to staff personal and professional problems, keep open lines of communications to parents and the community and, of course, handle the paperwork, all within the constraints of time and energy (Bush, 2003; Northouse, 2013; Mullins, 2002). Hence, management cannot be removed from leadership. This literature review shows that though there are differences, both management and leadership are important in an organisation (Bush, 2008). Effective educational leaders must attend to structure and culture, continuity and change; they are both managers and leaders, and they are both transactional and transformational (Nicholls, 1993).

Finally, Louis and Miles (1991) found that leadership and management are difficult to separate in the daily life of schools. They maintain that "school administrators need both leadership and management skills to deal with change and 'ordinary' circumstances." In fact, Southworth (1994) adds that "often 'the seemingly ordinary' and 'little stuff' of management is the vehicle for the leader's messages"(p.19). Therefore, school leaders need to be both managers and leaders to be more effective in ensuring school improvement.

**The Essential Qualities of a Leader**

To attain a better understanding of leadership, this segment examines the qualities of a leader as stressed by the literature and research findings. A leader is seen as somebody endowed with special traits. Hence, Aristotle felt that leaders are born, not made. In the same way, Paisey

(cited in Erayoma, 1990) in one of his fair models, 'The congenital or trait model' asserts that "leaders are born, rather than fashioned by the environment and that they possess qualities which are universal to leaders, such as intelligence, humour, tolerance, decisiveness, physical dominance, and attractiveness" (p. 28). Moreover, research carried out in Hong Kong by Hau-Siu Chow (2005) revealed that leaders possess the following attributes: the ability to inspire, performance orientation, decisiveness, visionary thinking, integrity, administrative competence, diplomacy, collaboration, self-sacrifice, and modesty. The essential qualities of a leader can be articulated thus: intelligence, responsibility, achievement, status, authority, participation, and charisma (Erayoma, 1990; Northouse, 2013).

In a bid to invalidate the model that says 'leaders are born,' Stogdill opines that

> … *Leadership is a relation that exists between persons in social situations and that persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessary be leaders in other situations.* (cited in Erayoma, 1990, p. 30)

He concludes that the qualities, characteristics, and skills required in a leader are determined to a large extent by the demands of the situation in which he/she is to function as a leader. This agrees with Paisey's second model - the situational model which stresses the relative and ubiquitous nature of leadership, suggesting that leadership is less about natural qualities, as about the right person being in the right place at the right time.



More recently, there is a switch from "inbred superiority" and "great men" idea to an attempt to identify general leadership traits. In this direction, most studies of leadership traits single out intelligence, initiative, and self-assurance (Brundrett, 1999; Northouse, 2013). This suggests that most people accept that leadership implies personality; that enthusiasm, warmth, moral courage and integrity are important qualities of a good leader.

Most researchers have listed the qualities of good leaders to include:

- Personal impact and presence;
- Adaptability to changing circumstances and new ideas;
- Energy, vigour, and perseverance;
- Self-confidence
- Enthusiasm;
- Intellectual ability;
- Reliability and integrity;
- Commitment (Erayoma, 1990; Northouse, 2013).

On the other hand, Bolam et al. (1993) listed the qualities found in ineffective leaders thus:

- Lacking dynamism and failing to inspire;
- Being insufficiently forceful;
- Failing to be at ease with others and enable them to feel at ease;
- Inability to accept any form of questioning or perceived criticism.

In analyzing the above qualities, commitment is seen as a key quality that makes a leader available, reliable, forceful,

and full of dynamism, which directly impacts on the organisation. A school leader, therefore, must be committed to his or her duties to ensure effectiveness and school improvement.

Another important quality of leadership is vision. This is the ability to articulate your philosophy to a range of people (Northouse, 2013; Hopkins, 1996; Moyles, 2006). As Bush and Coleman (2000) assert "Vision refers to a desirable future state of the organisation. It relates to the intended purposes of the school or college, expressed in terms of values and clarifying the direction to be taken by the institution" (p. 10). It is about desirable and attainable futures.

Considering vision as a mental image, Holmes, (1993) states that "vision is the mental image of the kind of school you are trying to build for the future" (p.16). This vision entails the aspiration one has for the present school and the future school, the quality of teaching and learning which one thinks is attainable and the values that must influence the things that will happen in the future. In education, 'vision,' like 'purpose,' denotes that something is being aimed at in the organisation. Moreover, like purpose, vision can give a sense of direction and motivation. On the other hand, vision differs from purpose, in that it presents a picture of how things will be at some point in the future, which purpose does not necessarily do (Haydon, 2007). The vision of a school embraces the following:

1. Those public statements and writings which refer to a desired future state for the school.
2. Those statements and tenets which describe the particular nuances of teaching and learning, which pertain to the school.
3. The plans and purposes which enact the school's future while specifically articulating what the school stands for (Holmes, 1993).



This vision should be made clear and must be communicated in a way which promotes commitment among members of the organisation. It means that vision must be made clear to all members for a better understanding of the setting's current and future thinking and direction (Moyles, 2006). Vision requires a set of shared values and a shared philosophy among the staff so that they could be motivated to work towards it with pride and enthusiasm (Haydon, 2007). With this, everyone would have a common ground and a common understanding of the vision.

In building vision in the organisation, leaders should avoid a 'top-down' approach, forcing staff and stakeholders to embrace their ideas. Instead, they should enrol the interests and aspirations of others (Foreman 1998; Northouse, 2013). This suggests that there is a need for school principals to communicate vision and mission statements with the stakeholders (Brighouse, 1991; Northouse, 2013). It further suggests that if vision is to be communicated successfully, the following qualities of leadership are needed:

- Keep it simple
- Avoid transferring the blame to actions beyond your control

- Concentrate on issues which reinforce the professional culture
- Practise being brave
- Empower others
- Build corporate visions
- Decide what not to do
- Find some allies

To ensure the effectiveness of the vision, a leader should have a definite plan on how he/she hopes to achieve the set vision (McCallion, 1998). A strong commitment to this vision is highly required from the leader to ensure effectiveness.

A further important quality of a good leader is communication skill. The leader needs to communicate the vision to others. This will enable others to share and own the vision. A communication that is top-down will portray a hierarchical, formal system, with the head relating to his colleagues through a series of descending lines of authority (Barker, 1990; Northouse, 2013). This links leadership qualities to leadership styles. This form of communication does not enhance effectiveness. An effective communicator is an individual who can make his or her message understood by everybody (Williams, 2002). A leader has to speak with clarity and conviction and be confident in getting any message or information across to others in the school (McCall & Lawlor, 2000). Leaders require well-developed information and communication technology skills. There is a need to establish effective communication chains both within the department and across the school. What needs to be



communicated, how it should be made, with whom are we communicating, and how it should take place must be borne in mind in the process of communication. In the final analysis, there must be an element of credibility in the leader. It may be noted that the key ingredient for effective communication is credibility. Consequently, the tone of one's voice must convey sincerity and credibility.

Other qualities of a leader are responsibility, accountability, flexibility, versatility, risk-taking, and ability to manage change (Moyles, 2006). Flexibility to be able to change the plan, as circumstances change, and still keep the final goal in view is very important in leadership (McCallion, 1998). In the same way, Southworth (1998) asserts that a leader should have the following qualities: modelling professionalism i.e., behaving with integrity, displaying consistency, being open and honest, displaying firmness but fairness to all, committed, well-organised, being personable, approachable and accessible. Therefore, the principal must be accessible to all in the school to ensure effectiveness.

Ogunu (2000) suggests that a purposeful and democratic school leader is needed who will share ownership of the school with colleagues. This brings out the quality of delegating. A leader should have the ability to delegate to a deputy without feeling threatened, and to involve members of staff in the planning and management of the school (Sheila & Sally, 1991). Since the principal does not make the school, he or she must work with others by delegating duties to ensure effectiveness (Obi, 2003).

Empirically, in a case-study research by Anne Gold and her colleagues, the principals studied

> *....were concerned with the personal qualities of school leaders. These included openness, accessibility, compassion, honesty, transparency, integrity, consistency, decisiveness, risk-taking, and an awareness of others and their situations.* (Gold et al., 2003, p. 136)

These findings agree with the view of Southworth (1998) in terms of openness and accessibility which a leader should have for effectiveness.

In an Australian case study of practices of a successful principal, Drysdale and Gurr (2011) found that successful principals have innate goodness, passion, commitment, equity, open, flexible, child-centred, and with a strong vision. The study further showed that successful school leaders promote a culture of innovation, collegiality, support, collaboration, and trust (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011), as well as shared decision-making, distributed leadership, and professional development (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011; Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford, 2005; Ojera & Yambo, 2014; Wagner et al., 2010).

Principals who succeeded in disadvantaged areas had the quality that enabled them to exercise perfect control of the school (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011; Norviewu-Mortty, 2012). In a qualitative case study of principals' strategies for academic improvement in disadvantaged rural areas in Ghana, which involved four schools, with two high-achieving and two low-achieving schools, Norviewu-



Mortty (2012) found that an effective leader has the quality and ability to develop a clear vision, honesty, commitment, integrity, exercising perfect control of the school, and a strong passion for the school leadership. The study further observed that successful principals in disadvantaged contexts were committed, open-minded, caring, good listeners, team players, inspiring, sympathetic, delegated responsibilities, and friendly (Norviewu-Mortty, 2012). Analysis of these findings indicated that these qualities enabled the principals to lead the school effectively in the disadvantaged areas.

Qualities of effective communication, including being flexible and focused; having clear goals; being knowledgeable in instructional management; having ability to inspire, lead innovations, and manage change; and having situational awareness and good personal relationship with stakeholders, have been associated with effective leaders (Imhangbe, 2012; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005). In a quantitative study on personal traits of effective school leaders in Central Coast of California, with data collected from 92 principals, Miller (2015) found that effective leaders possess conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness to experience in leading schools. Analysis of these findings suggested that school leaders need some essential qualities of being conscious of the environment and stakeholders to manage schools effectively and succeed in disadvantaged areas.

Finally, there are frequent difficulties in distinguishing critical qualities of leadership. Researchers discovered that

the people classified as effective leaders vary considerably in the qualities they possess (Northouse, 2013; Olagboye, 2004; Obi, 2003). The possession of certain qualities, indeed, does not guarantee success in all situations. What appears most helpful is for leaders to know their qualities and how they have helped them to be more effective. Everything the leader does, reflects what he or she is (Brundrett, 1999).

# Chapter Two

## Effective School Leadership

Assuming that an effective school is considered a successful school, and successful schools have effective leadership (The Wallace Foundation, 2011), this chapter analyses research on effective schools, effective leadership, qualities of the school leader, Catholic school leadership, and leadership styles. It further analyses l**e**adership in disadvantaged schools and improvement strategies for schools in disadvantaged areas.

**Effective Schools**

Lezotte and Snyder (2011) described an effective school as a school with no achievement gaps and with improved student achievement. In capturing the concept of effective schools, Lezotte (2009) and Lezotte and Snyder (2011) suggested that there are seven characteristics of an effective school. These characteristics include clear and focused mission, instructional leadership, a school climate that demands high expectations, effective monitoring of student progress, offering a good opportunity to learn on time on task, creating a safe and enabling environment, and maintaining a positive home-school relationship. These characteristics align with the components of Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) core leadership practices. An effective school has a principal who ensures and creates clear vision and mission, effective school climate (Thapa et al., 2013), and supervision of teaching and learning (Glanz & Sullivan, 2009; Tan, 2012), motivates the teachers and manages the curriculum (Glanz & Sullivan, 2009; Ojera &Yambo, 2014), and creates enabling environment for learning (Fullan, 2007;Thapa et al., 2013).

For decades, researchers have shown that school leaders are essential instruments for school effectiveness and student achievement even in poverty areas (Arogundade, 2015; Caldwell, 2010; Masewicz, 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2011). In this light, the National Center for Effective Schools Research and Development (2004) and Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) claimed that an effective school has sound school leadership, leadership team, trust, leadership training and support, and decision-



making process informed by data. Ross (2013) focused on similar variables in a qualitative study that examined the behaviours of principals in high-performing poverty schools. Ross (2013) found that school effectiveness was enhanced by capable leadership, support system, viable curriculum, making decisions informed by data, stakeholders' involvement, safe environment, a culture of high expectations, and professionalism.

An effective school is characterised by positive school climate (Colby, 2014). Supporting this, in a qualitative study of 142 teachers and principals in six high-achieving schools in a poverty setting, Reinhorn, Johnson, and Simon (2015) found that effective schools in poverty areas are characterised by teacher collaboration, positive school climate, principal leadership behaviour, and high level of trust. These findings agree with a qualitative study of an Indiana high-performing school in a poverty area, in which Colby (2014) found that an effective school was characterised by positive school climate, high expectations, effective leadership, community collaboration, behaviour strategies, and demonstrations of cultural competence. Colby's study corroborates qualities of positive school climate, effective leadership, and high expectations that were found by Barber (2013) in a study of principals in high-performing poverty schools in South Carolina. These findings imply that positive school climate and collaborative leadership may promote school effectiveness (Colby, 2014).

Vision has also been found to associate with effective schools, as shown in a study by Leithwood (2007) and the

core leadership practices of Leithwood and Riehl (2003) which note that effective schools are characterised by a shared vision, a unity of purpose, consistency of practice, and leadership that enjoys collegiality and collaboration (Dawson, 2007; Hallinger & Lee, 2013; Leithwood, 2007).

Effective schools nurture positive culture to promote school improvement (Mulford, et al., 2008). In support of this, Mulford et al. (2008) found in a qualitative case study carried out in 21 successful schools in a disadvantaged setting in Australia that successful schools in poverty areas nurtured positive culture, used measurable goals, involved parents, improved the quality of teachers, and re-enforced school goals. The study suggested that high-performing schools in disadvantaged and high-poverty settings nurture positive culture, clear expectation, positive relationship, and supportive structures (Mulford et al., 2008). Also, teamwork, committed teachers, improved results, and strong and focused leadership were considered as features that accounted for student achievement in the disadvantaged locality in the study by Mulford et al. (2008).

Successful schools are considered as schools with high excellent achievement and improvement on student learning in a disadvantaged environment (Reeves, 2009). In corroboration, Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) conceptualised an effective school as one that has high attainment of education excellence through improved student academic achievement, teamwork, and effective management regardless its context. Analysis of literature suggests that an effective school is perceived as a school



with competent principal leadership, with committed teachers; a school that supports teachers and students positively, with an enabling environment, and sustained effective climate and culture of learning (Hallinger & Lee, 2013; Reeves, 2009).

The above analysis of literature suggests that an effective principal is essential to school success. Brown (2012) found in a quantitative study of turnaround schools, that leadership, collaboration, school organisation, and professional development were essential to ensuring school effectiveness. Since schools that are successful in disadvantaged contexts have been shown to have effective principals, it is important to explore the concept of effective school leader in creating and sustaining academic standards in the disadvantaged communities.

**Effective Leadership**

Most researchers agree that strong leadership is necessary to ensure organisational success (Brundrett, 1999; Bush & Coleman, 2000; Brundrett et al., 2003; Northouse, 2013; Huber, 2004). Leadership is seen as the key to a successful school because it is an indispensable constituent in the effectiveness of the school (Northouse, 2013; Sammons et al., 1995). However, there is no universally agreed definition of effective leadership as such. Effectiveness is, rather, a contested notion, and one that has to remain open to question, to challenge and to refinement (Huber, 2004). In a bid to have a greater insight into it, some children in the study described an effective leader thus:

- Has a good education and is able to solve problem.
- Is very experienced as a teacher.

- Is easy going but firm.
- Knows how to look after the building and create a nice environment and a safe place for children.
- Knows how to take responsibility for things happening in the school and does not blame others.
- Is able to make children, adults and the community feel confident about the things they do in school. Also, builds a good relationship with the community.
- Provides a good example in their behaviour.

(*Adapted from* MacBeath, 1998, p. 147)

These children stressed the idea of relating to the community by building a relationship with the community. It keys into the view of MacBeath (1998) that effective leadership means "sustaining those relationships within a community in which all its members are heard, and taken account of." An effective leader is a dynamic leader, assertive, result-oriented, flexible, yet task-oriented, confident in sharing responsibility, involving staff and students in decision-making, and enabling the initiating and supporting of school improvement programmes (Nwagwu et al., 2004).

An effective principal is essential in leading and co-ordinating the teachers and students in schools in poverty areas to achieve success and effectiveness (Kunzle et al., 2010). In corroboration, the Wallace Foundation (2012) claimed that effective leaders determine the effectiveness of schools because they are a key constituent of the effectiveness of any school irrespective of the context. An



effective leader is considered as dynamic, assertive, result-oriented, flexible yet task-oriented, and democratic in decision-making (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Supovits et al., 2009). In a mixed method study of school leadership practices in challenging contexts, involving four schools and their principals, Masewicz (2010) observed that effective leaders are resilient, vision-builders, accountable, flexible, and have the ability to manage change. In the study, Masewicz conceptualised an effective leader as a servant with shared leadership and positive instructional climate that impact on student achievement.

Research has indicated that an effective leader shares power and responsibilities with teachers, shows firm leadership, motivates, responds to school change, and achieves goals (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Northouse, 2013; Ojera & Yambo, 2014; Ozgan, 2011; Reitzug et al., 2008). A growing body of research indicates the need for collaborative and participatory leadership and leadership that can share responsibilities with followers to ensure effectiveness (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Hufffman & Hipp, 2004; Marzano et al., 2005; Tan, 2012).

Effective principals build a supportive and collaborative relationship with stakeholders in leading the schools (Gronn, 2008; Ojera & Yambo, 2014). In support of this assertion, Ojera and Yambo (2014) found in a quantitative study of the role of principals' leadership styles in facilitating students' performance in Kenya that involved 150 participants that an effective leader builds a relationship that is open, collaborative, facilitative, and supportive with staff rather than a relationship that is

closed, exclusive, and controlling. The study further observed that an effective leader has a sense of direction, has a good relationship with people, has control over teaching and learning process, promotes teamwork, delegates, maintains shared decision-making, and enhance staff development. In their study, Ojera and Yambo found that effective leadership builds a leadership team that is capable of motivating and raising staff morale and enhance performance over time. Analysis of these findings suggests that leading schools in the disadvantaged areas need leaders that are capable of setting clear goals, articulating the school's vision, and creating positive school climate for effective learning.

There is an indication in the literature that an effective leader has a strong vision of the school, strives to inspire and motive the followers, has good communication, focuses on instructional process, and manages the internal and external environment of the school to impact on the student achievement (Huber, 2004; Nagy & Fawcett, 2011; Ojera & Yambo, 2014; Thapa et al., 2013; Tan, 2012). In a quantitative study of the impact of effective leadership on student achievement in schools in poverty areas, with 64 educators from Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Iowa, Merritt (2016) found that effective leaders involve others in decision-making, create school vision, stress students' expectation, create school culture, maintain effective communication, and improve student achievement. Analysis of the study suggests that an effective leader is a guardian to the school, a collaborator in the instructional process, and an accommodator of stakeholders in school leadership (Merritt, 2016).



Leithwood and Riehl (2003, 2005) observed that successful principals develop and improve their schools by supporting and sustaining the performance of their teachers and students. In corroboration, Ylimaki et al. (2007) found in a case-study of successful principals in 13 challenging, high-poverty schools in the United States, England, and Australia that successful principals in the challenging contexts set and sustained direction in their schools, and exerted a strong, positive influence on the teachers and students. The study further indicated that the principals studied exhibited Leithwood and Riehi's (2005) four core leadership practices (Ylimaki et al., 2007).

Schools need effective principals to implement school programs and achieve success (Duke et al., 2006; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Supporting this assertion, in a qualitative study of challenges facing 19 principals in low-performing schools, Duke, Tucker, Salmonowicz, and Levy (2006) observed that ineffective leadership lowers student achievement because, without quality leadership, school programs will not be implemented effectively. However, the study suggests that schools need effective leaders who are motivators, team players, visionaries, listeners, and good observers to achieve success.

An essential aspect of effective leadership is the ability to influence other people and achieve the set goals. These key terms: influencing and achieving set goals were articulated in the definitions and descriptions of leadership (Ade, 2003; Fapojuwo, 2003; Kreitner, 2001). In the ordinary usage, to be effective means to achieve the

desired result (Olagboye, 2004). Thus, effective leaders are strongly driven by a set of personal values which create a 'passionate conviction' to build, implement and continually monitor a vision by means of feedback from stakeholders. Such leaders are capable of managing tensions and dilemmas which arise from competing interest groups from the contexts which they work (Kreitner, 2001).

In considering the assessment of an effective leader, here are two criteria for judging the effectiveness of a leader: outcome and process (Fidler, 2002):
*Outcome*- It is what the leader achieves in terms of organisational outcome, and this can be seen in the performance of the organisation. This has to do with examination results, attendance and other published indicators, value added to children's progress and achievement of aims. Hence, Harris et al. (1996) assert that "one of the most common ways of measuring a school's performance is by its examination results" (p.10).

*Process* – This is the way and manner in which a leader carries out his or her work (Fidler, 2002). The implication of Fidler's assertion is that there is a need to combine both the outcome and process in judging the effectiveness of the leader.

An effective leader combines values and purpose with intra and interpersonal knowledge (Leithwood et al., 1999). Such a leader builds a relationship that is open, collaborative, facilitative and supportive with staff against the relationship that is closed, exclusionary, and



controlling (MacBeath, 1998). Research conducted by Zhang (1994) in Singapore reveals that effective principals possess attributes such as being assertive, authoritative, competitive, aggressive, stubborn, independent-minded, more considerate and adaptable.

Moreover, a Canadian review of school leaders concludes that 'effective' leaders were good role models in their schools, they set examples by 'working hard, having lots of energy, being genuine in their beliefs, modelling openness, having good skills, and by showing evidence of learning by growing and changing themselves' (Leithwood et al., 1997). In considering these two research findings, one might say that effective leaders are those who know where they want to go, but also know how to track with the wind. Effectiveness is about making choices and about managing the 'fit' between the external world and the internal world of the school (Northouse, 2013; MacBeath, 1998). This agrees with a study carried by Ian (2003) which indicated that effective leadership could be seen broadly as a process of enabling interactions between internal, external and individual domains of activity. The implication is that effective school leaders are 'good' leaders who are able to balance both the external and internal activities of the school for improvement. Effective leaders are distinguished by their vision, passion, focusing on classroom pedagogy, capacity to bring a critical spirit into the complex job of headship, and ability to improve staff and pupil performance (MacBeath, 1998). In this light, leaders may be considered effective if they possess the ability to set direction, collaboratively develop and articulate a vision, show honesty,

commitment, energy, internal locus of control, integrity, and a passion for continuous improvement of the school.

The characteristics of effective leaders have been further articulated by Ribbins et al. (1990) thus:

- Possess a vision of what the organisation with which they are connected should be like.
- Know how to inspire and motivate those with whom they work.
- Understand the major operational levers which can be employed to control or change an organisation's course.
- Are intensely sensitive to and continually reflect upon the interaction of external environmental conditions and internal organisational dynamics.
- Understand the fundamental components of strategic thinking that can be used to guide or alter an organisation.
- Comprehend the symbolic significance involved in representing their organisation to the outside world (adapted from Dean, 1999, pp. 37-38).

Here, vision, as a quality of a leader, is seen by both MacBeath, 1998 and Ribbins et al. (1990) as a sign of effectiveness of the leader. This assertion keys into the empirical findings of some researchers, as summarised below. Various research projects carried out by Bradley (1988), Leigh (1994) and Scheerens (1992) have, meanwhile, shown that an effective school leader:

- Has clear thinking, has vision and a sense of direction
- Has the ability to see the whole picture.



- Is a competent planner and has the ability to get things done.
- Has good relationship with people.
- Possesses intelligence and maturity.
- Has the ability to inspire and engender excitement about the work.
- Has concern for what is happening in classrooms and the centrality of learning and teaching.
- Encourages collegiate approaches, teamwork, and shared decision-making.
- Delegates effectively.
- Deals effectively with problems.
- Sets high expectations for self and teachers.
- Encourages active reflection about teaching on the part of the staff.
- Encourages appropriate staff development.
- Accepts professional accountability.
- Encourages parents to support the work of the school.
- Is well organised and makes effective use of time. (Adapted from Dean, 1999, p. 38)

The above qualities of an effective leader stress the idea of maturity. An effective leader should have a high sense of maturity, and to ensure this, the leader must be able to assess his or her strengths and weaknesses. It is highly recommended, for instance, that leaders should carry out an assessment of their effectiveness from time to time. An honest assessment will help to reposition the leader more effectively as he or she takes advantage of his or her strength while working on his or her weakness for better performance. An effective leader creates a personal development programme and, is a good learner who

learns how to handle stress. A good leader, meanwhile, also has the ability to manage conflict and time, to motivate and to influence the followers to achieve organisational goals.

Research findings from three studies carried out by Teddlie and Stringfield (1993), Rutter et al. (1979) and Mortimore et al. (1988) revealed three facts about leadership effectiveness thus:

1. Teddlie and Stringfield's (1993) study indicated that effective leaders have stable and appropriate leadership, use formal and informal structures, share their power and respond to school change.
2. A study by Rutter et al. (1979) showed that student outcomes in secondary schools were better when school heads adopted both firm leadership and teacher involvement than adopting only one of them.
3. Mortimore et al.'s (1988) study revealed that what was important to the success of the schools was the purposeful leadership of the staff, which occurred when the school head understood school needs and involved the staff in administration by sharing power with them.

In considering these studies, Reynolds (2000) identified eight characteristics that are important in determining the quality and effectiveness of leadership thus:

- Firm and purposeful leadership of the head;
- Involving others through participative approach;
- Exhibiting instructional leadership by ensuring teaching and learning;



- Having direct intervention by monitoring staff performance;
- Effective selection and replacement of staff;
- Focusing on the importance of academic goals and processes;
- Ability to motivate the staff for more productivity;
- Having the ability to use monitoring and evaluation system to manage the school.

These qualities put forward by Reynolds (2000) bring in the leadership styles of distribution, instructional and transformation in relation to effective leadership. This shows the link between effective leadership and leadership styles. Hence, the literature on effective leaders suggests that they are 'transformative,' rather than 'transactional' (Burns, 1978), 'invitational' rather than 'autocratic' (Stoll & Fink, 1996), 'empowering' rather than 'controlling' (Blasé & Anderson, 1995). We shall examine these styles in detail in the next chapter.

Finally, effective leaders are both skilled and trained. They have the know-how of leadership (Northouse, 2013; Kreitner, 2001). Therefore, principals should be trained on leadership roles to ensure effectiveness. As Uwazurike (1991) notes, "they need specialized training in educational administration and planning to provide better leadership of the schools under their charge" (p. 262). In this direction, Ocho (cited in Uwazurike, 1991) asserts, "School leaders … must be given the knowledge, insight, and skills to enable them to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently." This indicates that training enhances effectiveness.

# Chapter Three

## Styles of Leadership

There are a number of theories of leadership that have developed along with history of leadership, such as Trait (Northouse, 2013; Stogdill, 1948; Pierce and Merrill, 1974; Mahoney, 1960; Kreitner, 2001; Olagboye, 2004), Behavioural (Bass, 1990; Northouse, 2013; Kreitner, 2001), Situational (Stogdill, cited in Bass, 1990; Northouse, 2013; Obi, 2003), Contingency (Northouse, 2013; Kreitner, 2001; Lingard et al., 2003; Obi, 2003) and the

Path-Goal theories (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; Northouse, 2013; Olagboye, 2004; Kreitner, 2001). A critical examination of these theories based on the literature and empirical findings indicate that these theories underline the factors and motives behind different leadership practices, styles and leadership effectiveness (Olagboye, 2004).

During Second World War, the study of leadership took on a significant new twist. Rather than concentrating on the personal traits of successful leaders, researchers began to turn their attention to patterns of leader behaviour, known as leadership styles. Put differently, attention turned from who the leader was to how the leader actually behaved (Kreitner, 2001). In some earlier explanations of leadership styles, researchers classified different styles on the basis of how leaders used their authority. As Ogunu (2000) notes, leadership styles may be described as the "dominant behavior of an occupant" of a leadership position. Leadership styles can broadly be classified into three: "autocratic, Laissez-Faire and democratic" (Ogunu, 2000, p. 87), though more recently, the search light has shifted to leadership styles like invitational, instructional, transactional, and transformational leadership. Hence, this chapter exposes the different leadership styles in line with the relevant literature and findings. This is relevant because it will help readers to locate leadership practice in Nigeria, and suggest better practices for school leadership, as informed by the relevant literature and findings.



**Autocratic Leadership Style**

In this leadership style, all authority and responsibility are centered on the leader (Ogunu, 2000). It is leadership through force, with little or no acknowledgment of the capacity of followers to contribute to decision making (Northouse, 2013; Whawo, 1995). It is predicated on Douglas McGregor's Theory X, which holds that people are naturally lazy; they regard work only as necessary for earning a living and therefore will avoid it as far as possible. Consequently, they need to be coerced and strictly controlled by their leaders in order to get them to give their best in the workplace. It is a style that connotes the behaviour of a leader who tells subordinates what to do and who demands and expects to be obeyed without question (Kreitner, 2001; Olagboye, 2004). It is primarily a downward flow of communication. Hence, Barth (1988), in critiquing this style of leadership, asserts that it encourages the top-down relationship, as he notes:

> *Top-down hierarchical relationships foster dependency. … This dependency immobilizes and distances teacher and principal when what they need to accomplish their important work is maximum mobility, responsibility, and cooperation* (cited in Blasé & Anderson, 1995, p. 27).

Rather, it places emphasis on the task to be accomplished at the expense of human considerations and does not allow followers to contribute to the decision-making process. Hence, researchers are of the opinion that an autocratic leader does not give his subordinates the

opportunity to contribute to decision-making; he sees opposition as a threat to goal accomplishment and prevents it as much as possible (Ogunu, 2000). In this connection, Obi (2003) states some characteristics of autocratic leaders as follows:

- Dictation of all policies and procedures
- Absence of effective communication
- Imposition of tasks and methods on the subordinates
- Nagging and suspecting the subordinates hence strict supervision
- Lack of trust.

In evaluating this model of leadership, one could say it is a defective model, which emanates from fear and the leaders' feelings of insecurity.

In a school system, this style of leadership could have a negative effect on teachers and school development. This is obvious in some research carried out in this area. Firstly, McNeil (1986) discovered a strong relationship between control-oriented school administrators, teacher alienation and the development of 'defensive teaching' in the classroom (Blasé & Anderson, 1995). Moreover, the studies of Kurt Kemn and his associates, according to Edem (1982), in which three experimental social climates- autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire were created to test their effects on children, revealed that children under autocratic control exhibited much more aggressive behaviour than those under democratic leadership. In analysing these findings and the literature, there is a strong indication that this style of leadership has



a lot of consequences in an organization. Some of the consequences of autocratic style of leadership include the fact that it encourages 'eye service' and gossiping out of fear among staff. It affects the behaviour of the students who are responding to the school environment. Also, it is capable of lowering the morale of the workers who are most likely to resent the way decisions are taken (Obi, 2003). As Kreitner, (2001) notes, "this approach tends to stifle individual initiative" (p. 467). In addition, it tends to reduce workers' job satisfaction which will inevitably affect the productivity and promote unsatisfactory working climate or condition. After a careful research analysis, Blasé and Anderson (1995) assert thus:

> *An overwhelming portion of the data supports the general conclusion that the use of control tactics by school principals tends to have profound negative consequences for teachers. School-wide performance was negativity affected in terms of morale, involvement and expression. Relationships among teachers, between teachers and principals, and between teachers and students also suffered as a result of the use of these tactics…." (p. 41)*

The use of power such as coercion sometimes affects the psychological dispositions of teachers, and thus has significant negative consequences. Etzioni (cited Blasé and Anderson, 1995) argues that when teachers perceive that principals misuse power, it always has a negative effect

on their involvement in work, as well as on the stability of the school as a whole. In all, there are doubts as to whether this style of leadership can promote school improvement (Obi, 2003). Unfortunately, this style of leadership is the most practised in Nigerian secondary schools (Olagboye, 2004). Authors have argued that many practice this style of leadership because Nigeria has been under military rule for many years (Ozaralli, 2003; Ogunu, 2000; Olagboye, 2004). The questions that still need to be answered are whether this style of leadership affects the effectiveness of the principals; whether the military style of leadership actually affects the principals' concept of leadership; whether it promotes school improvement; and whether this is still the most practised leadership styles in Nigeria today.

**Laissez-faire Leadership Style**

"Laissez-Faire" is a French word meaning "let people do as they want it." This style of leadership is characterized by indifference and the allowing of complete freedom to the group and its individual members to do as they wish (Northouse, 2013; Obi, 2003). Individuals are thus left alone to set and pursue their own goals. The behaviour of such leaders is marked by indecision, vacillation, and indifference towards the group and their activities (Ajayi, 1997). As Whawo (1995) asserts, "Since the followers are free to do whatever they like, the Laissez-Faire leader has no authority" (p. 26). The leader is not bothered and does not exercise control over the conduct of workers under him. The philosophy behind this style of leadership is that workers will work towards organisational goals if they are committed to them (Kreitner, 2001). The less the supervision, the better the commitment and productivity. This style places little or no emphasis on consideration for work performance or human welfare (Northouse, 2013). The leader has neither a clear vision of the goal of his group or organisation, nor does he develop policies for it (Olagboye, 2004).



This style of leadership turns the means into an end (Northouse, 2013). It reduces the quality of job performance and encourages low productivity (Obi, 2003). It can only lead to a state of organisational anarchy where everything goes. As Kreitner, (2001) notes, "group may drift aimlessly in the absence of direction from the leader" (p. 467). In this leadership style, it will be difficult to control and maintain discipline among the staff and students, since the leader appears to be a figure head (Olagboye, 2004).

**Democratic Leadership**

A democratic leadership style is predicated on the belief that members of a group who will be affected by a policy should be involved in the formulation of such a policy. The definition put forward by Bush (2011) below captures the main features of this style of leadership:

> *Democratic models assume that organizations determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion leading to consensus. Power is shared among some or all members of the organization who are thought to*

> *have a mutual understanding about the objectives of the institution (P. 72).*

This style of leadership is based on the assumptions that organisations have professional staff that possess the authority of expertise, and that staff also have a right to share in the wider decision-making process. This leadership style further assumes that there is a common set of values held by staff of the organisation, and that staff have formal representation within the various decision-making bodies. Finally, a democratic model assumes that decisions are reached by a process of consensus (Bush, 2003).

Democratic leadership style is rooted in Douglas McGregor's Theory Y which posits that people in the work place are capable of being responsible and mature; they consequently require no coercion or excessive control by their leader; rather, the leader delegates a significant amount of authority, whilst retaining ultimate responsibility (Kreitner, 2001; Northouse, 2013). In considering the characteristics of democratic style, Olagboye (2004) states:

- Every member of the group is accorded due respect
- Welfare of the group members is given adequate attention
- Leadership responsibilities are shared with or delegated to group members
- Group members are frequently involved in decision making



- Individual and group initiatives and creativity are encouraged
- Facilitation of participatory management through assumption of coordinating and organizing roles by the leader.

These above-mentioned characteristics indicate that the democratic leader gives consideration to his subordinates to contribute to the decision-making process through meetings and consultations (Ogunu, 2000). It further stresses the importance of all human beings and they are consequently given the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the decisions within the organisation, unlike the autocratic leadership. Staff always desire to be part of decision-making process. Research conducted by Davies (1983) among fifty-one heads of department in secondary schools reveals that they desire a higher level of involvement in decision-making (Bush, 2003). This finding shows that staff involvement in decision making processes is a key to ensuring leadership effectiveness and school improvement.

Within a democratic setting, there is some degree of flow of effective communication between the leader and the led (Obi, 2003). This communication, in both formal and informal ways, promotes the cross-fertilisation of ideas and increases membership morale and strong support for any decisions reached (Northouse, 2013). The leader strives to inspire and motivate the majority of his subordinates or followers. Research by Ndongko (1984) on the principals' leadership styles and their influence on their relationships with teachers and students shows that

principals who have a democratic leadership style have cordial relationships with their teachers and students. This enhances personal commitment through participation. The finding further indicates that a democratic style promotes school effectiveness and school improvement because both the leader and the led see themselves as partners in the pursuit of institutional effectiveness.

Nonetheless, the decision-making process may be slow and cumbersome, since many people may be consulted (Northouse, 2013). In fact, the democratic process is time consuming. Criticizing this style of leadership, Kreitner (2001) argues that "Practical experience has shown that the democratic style does not always stimulate better performance. Some employees prefer to be told what to do rather than to participate in decision making" (p. 469). In all, though decision making may be slow and some want to be told what to do, this style of leadership encourages more collaboration that promotes school improvement (Northouse, 2013).

**Distributed Leadership**

Literature and research have revealed that effective leadership need not be located in the person of the leader, but can be distributed within the school (MacBeath, 1998; Northouse, 2013; Harris, 2002; Harris & Muijs, 2002). Reasoning along this line, Bennett et al. (2003) assert thus:

- Leadership is not located in the individual but is 'an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals' and through this dynamism people work together in such a way that they pool their initiative and expertise, the outcome is a product or energy which is greater than the sum of their individual actions.'
- Leadership is wider than those appointed to formal leader roles, so there is an 'openness of the boundaries of leadership.'
- Leadership boundaries are open by embracing a range of knowledge and skills so that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many, not the few' (adapted from Gunter, 2005, p. 51).



This implies a redistribution of power and a realignment of authority within the organisation (Harris et al., 2003). Here, leadership is shared among formal and informal leaders, which means engaging many people in the leadership activity in an organization. This agrees with the view of Gronn (2000) that distributed leadership is an emergent property of a group or a network of interacting individuals. It is different from team working, which is not necessarily leadership (taking the initiative and helping to set the direction of activity), though the collective, emergent character of what results from people collaborating in team is similar to concerted action, which is the most significant form of distributed leadership. According to Gronn (2002), this refers to the additional dynamic or energy that arises from individuals pooling and sharing their initiative, ideas, and expertise, so that the result is greater than the sum of their individual actions. It is understood as a practice distributed over leaders, followers and their situation (Spillane et al., 2004), and incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals in a school who work at guiding and

mobilizing staff in the instructional change process (Gunter, 2005). Hence, Spillane et al. (2004) assert that distributed leadership may be understood as the practice where the leadership function is *stretched over* the work of a number of individuals, and where the leadership task is accomplished through the interaction of *multiple leaders.* Spillane's definition depicts the social dimension of leadership. This means that leadership activity is distributed in the interactive web of leaders, followers, and situation. The usage of *stretched over* implies interdependency rather than dependency, embracing how leaders of various kinds and in various roles share responsibility.

Again, distributed leadership means multiple sources of guidance and direction, following the contours of expertise in an organization, made coherent through a common culture (Harris, 2004; 2005). It is the 'glue of a common task or goal- improvement of instruction- and a common frame of values for how to approach that task (Elmore, 2000). The implication of these definitions is that distributed leadership is a leadership that is shared across various members of the organization in accordance with contextual variables, needs, interests, and abilities (Lindahi, 2007). It further implies that leadership requires us to de-centre 'the leader,' and work should be shared among members. There are three patterns of distribution in this form of leadership: spontaneous collaboration, intuitive working relations and institutionalised and quasi-institutionalised practices:



- *Spontaneous collaboration*: In this type of distribution, colleagues with shared skills, interests and backgrounds come together deliberately in twos and threes to address a temporary difficulty.

- *Intuitive working relation:* This happens when two or more organisation members come to rely on each other to accomplish their work. This effective role sharing occurs when members capitalise on their dependence on one another by balancing each other's skills.

- *Institutionalized and quasi-institutionalized practice*: This may occur in two, three, four or more multi-member work units, or even in larger units like the team. A good example is the concept of partner principals. This entails split-task specialization (i.e. one principal for administration and another for curriculum; emergent split-task specialisation (i.e. the division of labour is negotiated); alternating co-principals (i.e. turn-taking or simultaneous 50-50 job sharing); and rotation of responsibilities within a collective teacher leadership executive group (i.e. non-principal school) (Gronn, 2003). In all, Ross et al. (2005) maintain that "in the performance of work, different specialisms are required. This further requires interdependent relations so that specialisms can be integrated…" (p. 136).

Distributed leadership is characterised as: authorised, dispersed, and democratic (Woods, 2004). As authorised-work is distributed from the principal to others. It is accepted because it is recognised as legitimate, coming from the head. In a system, it is through delegation of the

leader to the led; in a market, it is empowerment of the led to work in a particular way. Woods is of the opinion that although leadership may be distributed, it does not necessarily imply an absence of hierarchy (Gunter, 2005). Thus, we should not confuse democratic leadership with distributive leadership. Consequently, Woods (2004) argues that democratic leadership is different from distributed leadership, though with some similarities in a number of ways:

- While both enable analytical description, it is democratic leadership that has more normative potential.
- While both are emergent and reveal a dispersal of influence, it is democratic leadership that acknowledges formal leaders, as well as leadership.
- While both are inclusive, it is democratic leadership that has open boundaries, and so involvement is based less on organisational requirements and more on wider and widening recognition.
- While both recognise the importance of the position of those who receive the distribution, it is democratic leadership that recognises the significance and value of dissent, whereas distribution assumes political neutrality.
- While both value autonomy, it is democratic leadership that extends this beyond the instrumentality of organisational goals, to encompass the rationality of decision making and ethics (adapted from Gunter, 2005, p. 56).



Furthermore, distributed leadership is concerned with managing professional knowledge and skills in the school. What is distributed is not simply 'leadership,' but a particular form, namely learning-centred leadership, because this embraces knowledge creation, management, and transfer, while improving the quality of teaching and learning (Southworth, 2004). It is more than a formal position of leadership; once teachers are invited to share their strengths and lead discussions, workshops, and seminars; in effect, to lead by example, leadership becomes distributed in a way which breaks away from positional leadership. Hence, Gronn (2003) asserts that distributed leadership challenges the belief in 'the power of one,' that is, the belief in the heroic, individual leader; it is an effort to empower everyone.

On a positive note, research has shown that distributed leadership has a positive effect on pedagogy, school culture and educational quality (King, 1996; Harris and Muijs, 2005). Research further shows that the success of distributed leadership within a school may be influenced by a number of interpersonal factors such as relationships with other teachers and school management. This is so because one has to ensure that management is not threatened, and is able to influence other staff. The evidence- based study of Bell et al. (2002) identifies leadership as an important tool in school success, but this leadership must be distributed among staff and others so as to impact directly on student learning outcomes. Successful leaders are those who distribute leadership, understand relationships and recognize the importance of reciprocal learning processes that lead to shared purposes

(Harris & Muijs, 2005). Hence, as Fullan (2001) avers, "Good leaders foster good leadership at other levels. Leadership at other levels produces a steady stream of future leaders for the system as a whole" (p. 10).

Distributed leadership promotes leadership capacity in schools (Harris & Lambert, 2003). It opens up the possibility of all teachers becoming leaders at various times. This has the most potency and potential for school improvement because it is premised upon collaborative forms of working among teachers (Harris et al., 2003). By implication, distributed leadership de-monopolizes leadership, and potentially increases the sources and voices of influence in organizations beyond just one; it helps widen the span of worker and member participation (Gronn, 2008). Moreover, research by Silns and Mulford (2003) has shown that student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school community, and where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them. These findings have linked distributed leadership to student outcomes. It indicates that this style of leadership is capable of promoting school improvement (Harris, 2004). In fact, it shows that for truly significant school reform or improvement to take place, power must be distributed across the faculty and staff (Lindahl, 2007).

In stressing the advantages of distributed leadership, we must not forget the difficulties associated with its implementation in schools. The traditional hierarchies in school with all demarcations of positions and pay-scale would not be readily responsive to a more fluid and



distributed approach to leadership (Harris, 2004). Moreover, there are inherent threats to status and the status quo, considering all that distributed leadership stands for in the school. In the first instance, it requires those in formal positions to relinquish power to others or share power with others, which many are not ready to let go (Harris, 2004). It further challenges the authority and ego of the head and places the principal in a vulnerable position because of the lack of direct control over certain activities (Harris & Muijs, 2005). The top-down structure of leadership in our schools can actively prevent teachers from attaining autonomy and taking on leadership roles within the school, as they demarcate roles and responsibilities (Harris, 2004). In addition, Harris and Muijs (2005) maintain that distributed leadership poses a major challenge in terms of how to distribute development responsibility, and who distributes responsibility and authority. It is clear that only a top-down approach to leadership could accommodate distributed leadership. Hence, despite the growing currency of the idea of distributed leadership, research on what it means in practice for organizational processes and values is relatively limited (Wood et al., 2004).

Finally, the literature thus far has suggested that schools are not faced with the choice between top-down leadership and distributed leadership; both forms can coexist simultaneously within the school (Harris, 2005). This view indicates that neither is sufficient and that for large-scale reform to be successful both must be provided in a coordinated form (Leithwood et al., 2004).

**Instructional Leadership**

The prime function of leadership for authentic school improvement is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning (Hopkins, 2003, p. 114). This is achieved by creating learning opportunities for both students and teachers. This approach is called Instructional Leadership. Instructional leadership has been defined in different ways; most of these definitions usually specify the broad functions of instructional leadership, the behaviours that comprise it, and what it produces. In a broad sense, Greenfield (1987) refers to it as "actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for children" (p. 69). Here, the leader works with the staff, teachers, parents, and students to achieve school improvement goals and other targets.

It also emphasizes the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students (Leithwood et al., 1999). This form of leadership focuses on other organizational variables that are believed to have important consequence for teacher behaviour. In describing instructional leaders in terms of what they do, Hopkins (2001) says that instructional leadership "defines and promotes the school's mission; it establishes parameters and goals for the school's instructional program and it promotes an environment in which learning is encouraged" (p. 119). In this light, it could be seen as those activities that a principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning. In addition, it focuses on capacity-building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual



and professional capital for teachers (Sergiovanni, 1998). This means that the focus is on the development of the school through developing others. It helps to bring out the best in the teachers and enhance their feelings of professional worth. In analyzing these descriptions and definitions above, the literature shows that this style of leadership focuses directly on learning processes, school improvement and more educationally centered. Hence, Harris et al. (2003) note, "A definition of leadership in terms of instruction tends to be much more focused and specific than many other conceptions of leadership in education" (p. 21).

Furthermore, the current literature about instructional leadership looks at prescriptive models which describe instructional leadership as the integration of the tasks of direct assistance to teachers, group development, staff development, curriculum development, and action research (Glickman et al., 1985); as a democratic, developmental, and transformational activity based on equality and growth (Gordon, 1997); as an inquiry-oriented endeavour that encourages teacher voice; and as a discursive, critical study of classroom interaction to achieve social justice (Smyth, 1997).

An instructional leader is one who could work with teachers to promote classroom learning. Hence, Cunningham and Cordeiro (2006) posit, "for instructional leaders, classroom visits are more than opportunities to monitor teachers' work. They are occasions to clarify the primary mission of the school i.e. teaching and learning" (p. 213). To push this concept

further, Stoll and Fink, (1996) articulated the idea of Smith and Andrews (1989) and opine that instructional leader possesses four sets of competences: the leader as a 'resource provider,' an 'instructional resource,' a communicator' and a 'visible presence.' In research conducted by Blasé and Blasé (2000), they found a model of effective instructional leadership which consists of: talking with teachers to promote reflection and professional growth. In this light, instructional leadership is actively and visibly involved in the planning and implementation of change, but encourages collaboration and working in teams. It stresses the quality of teaching and learning with high expectations of all staff and all students, whilst recognizing that support and encouragement are necessary for everyone to give of their best (Hopkins, 2003).

In general, research shows that instructional leaders:

1. Must have been successful teachers in the classroom
2. Are more likely to be women
3. Have a clear value based vision for their schools
4. Explain all activities engaged in as meaningful for success (Northouse, 2013; Harchar & Hyle, 1996).

Many researchers such as Leithwood, Steinbach, Begley, Goldring, and Pasternak (1994) assert that 'instructional leadership has become a widely preferred image of the principal's role.' Research indicates that effective schools have principals who are instructional leaders (Goldring & Pasternak, 1994). In line with this view, Hopkins, (undated) posits,



> *I have argued for a style of leadership that is consistent with raising levels of student achievement. From this perspective, instructional leaders are able to create synergy between a focus on teaching and learning on the one hand, and capacity building on the other* (National College for school leadership, p. 5).

However, some authors have criticised this style of leadership in the past two decades. Firstly, Blasé and Blasé (2000) argue that despite the research done in this area, the relationships among instructional leadership, teaching, and even student achievement have not been adequately studied. Secondly, Foskett and Lumby, (2003) argue that the implementation of instructional leadership is not universal. In China, principals have 'limited involvement in curriculum matter; in Japan, the principal's role is largely symbolic and ritualistic; in Thailand, principals view themselves primarily as administrators; and in America, principals are not necessarily qualified teachers and so may have limited experience of instruction. Moreover, a case study of an Australian secondary school concludes that the curriculum linkage between departments is more significant in achieving improved student performance than instructional leadership on the part of the principal or senior managers (Northouse, 2013; Dimmock & Wildly, 1995). A review of the literature indicates that there no convincing international connection between effective instructional leadership on the part of the principal or senior managers and student performance

(Foskett & Lumby, 2003). This finding implies that the leadership that enhances student performance is largely based on a number of roles performed by different people within educational organisation, and that there cannot be a monolithic prescription that can be applied across culture. Though some of these studies do not see the connection between instructional leadership and student's performance, authors like Goldring and Pasternak (1994) and Hopkins, (2001) maintain that instructional leadership enhances student outcomes.

In all these, Hopkins is of the opinion that instructional leadership is necessary for school improvement, though it needs to work with transformational orientation. He notes that "considering the leadership model appropriate for authentic school improvement, a conceptual combination of transformational and instructional orientations would seem most appropriate and practically helpful" (Hopkins, 2001, p. 119).

**Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership is a process of clarifying structures, roles, responsibilities, relationships, and getting things done on the basis of a straightforward exchange between leaders and followers (Aspinwall, 1998; Bush & Coleman, 2000). This open system model is what Leithwood and others refer to as transactional leadership (Leithwood, 1992). It developed initially out of a social exchange perspective, emphasizing the implicit social exchange that existed between leader and followers. Leithwood says it is leadership:



> *Based on an exchange of services (from a teacher, for example) for various kinds of rewards (salary, recognition, intrinsic rewards) that the leader controls, at least in part…. (p. 9)*

This has to do with the leader-follower dichotomy; here, the leader is superior to the followers and the followers somehow depend on the leader. The situation is regarded as a "contract" between leader and follower (Coleman, 1994). In it, it is the duty of the followers to work towards the achievement of organisational goals while the leader must satisfy the needs of followers.

Transactional leadership is task-oriented and follower-oriented (Kreitner, 2001). The leader gives consideration to both the needs of the organization (nomothetic dimension) and the needs and expectations of the group members (ideographic dimension). This style of leadership is based on the exchange relationships between the leader and the follower (Cardona, 2000; Kreitner, 2001). These descriptions stress the relationship between the leader and the led, which is based on exchange. In this relationship, the leader promotes uniformity by providing extrinsic (positive or negative) rewards to the collaborators. The distinguishing behavior of this leadership style is that the leader alternates between concern for getting the job done and concern for the development and growth of group members; and between encouraging and motivating group members to perform tasks, and directing and closely supervising them to ensure that tasks are performed to his or her satisfaction (Barker, 2005; Cardona, 2000).

Transactional leaders rely mainly on standard forms of inducement, reward, punishment, and sanction to control their followers. Hence, as Bass and Avolio (1994) assert, "transactional leadership occurs when the leader rewards or disciplines the follower depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance" (p. 4). The leader monitors followers to ensure mistakes are not made but allows groups to exist (Oluremi, 2008). Consequently, good transactional leaders are usually good negotiators (Cardona, 2000). By analysis, this form of leadership seems to emphasize collective decision-making and the distribution of responsibility.

Furthermore, leaders are seen as engaging in behaviors that maintain quality interaction between themselves and followers (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). The four underlying characteristics of transactional are that (1) leaders use contingent rewards to motivate employees. (2) Leaders exert corrective action only when subordinates fail to obtain performance goals. (3) The leader is superior to followers and followers depend on leader. (4) It is premised upon tasks being delegated to followers and followers completing these tasks (Harris et al., 2003).

This leadership model is primarily about management of school structure. The leader focuses on the purposes of the organization, developing plans, ensuring task completion, facilitating information flow, and working well with the various school groups, particularly teachers. Hence, Harris et al. (2003) note that, the role of the transactional leader "is to focus upon the purposes of the organization and to assist people to recognize what needs to be done in



order to reach a desired outcome" (p. 16). Transactional leaders make corrective criticisms, proactively monitoring the extent of followers' compliance with their requirements, or reactively intervening after problems have occurred (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005). These are important in the whole process of school improvement. Transactional leaders can be very effective when other purposes of change are clearly defined, such as a curriculum modification, a procedural change, or the introduction of a new textbook, to mention but a few. Though transactional leadership is equated with keeping the organization going, rather than taking the organization somewhere, Southworth (1998) argues that the importance of transactional leadership should not be under-estimated, because it is very important that a school functions efficiently and effectively as an organization, particularly in these days of self-managing schools. Efficiency and effectiveness come from the day to day management of the school which the transactional leader ensures. Transactional leadership is therefore necessary, but not sufficient (Southworth, 1998).

On the other hand, transactional leadership may also be seen as undesirable form of leadership, which involves a manipulative, *quid pro quo* in which the leader says, "If you do this for me, I will do that for you" (Burns, cited Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005, p. 259). Since transactional leadership has become undesirable, many researchers have criticized it. This model is founded more on structure and organisational purpose rather than on people, and may not advance the course of changing beliefs, feelings and attitudes of the followers in pursuit of school

improvement (Itaman, 2007). Hence, Harris et al. (2003) assert that "In approaching school development and improvement, transactional leadership would be primarily concerned with promoting structural rather than cultural change" (p. 16). Indeed, it is best suited to static schools where conformity rather than creativity is the norm, and not dynamic schools (West et al., 2000). In addition, transactional leadership does not produce long-time commitment to the values and vision being promoted by the school leaders, since it does not engage staff beyond the immediate gains (Bush, 2008). In reality, transactional leaders do not generate passion and excitement, and they do not empower or inspire individuals to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the organization (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005). In itself, transactional leadership is thus insufficient to stimulate improvement (Day et al., 2000). Consequently, in Israel and many parts of the world, principals are expected to move from transactional to transformational leadership to ensure organizational change and school improvement (Foskett & Lumby, 2003).

**Transformational Leadership**

The concern about the emotional and symbolic aspects of leadership influences which emerged in leadership discourses during the 1980s has led to the emergence of transformational leadership. Mcgregor Burns (1978) advances the idea that transactional leadership and transformational leadership could be contrasted in the political context. For him, transactional leadership motivates by the offer of material rewards for success and punishes failure; transformational leadership seeks to



inspire followers to exceed their own and the leader's expectations. In a bid to distinguish between transactional and transformational, Gomez-Mejia et al. (2005) state their characteristics based on the distinctions made by Bass et al. (1990), as in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: *The characteristics of transactional and transformational leadership*

| TRANSACTIONAL LEADER | TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER |
|---|---|
| ***Contingent reward*:** Contracts exchange of rewards for effort, promises rewards for good performance, recognizes accomplishment. | ***Charisma*:** Provides vision and sense of mission, instils pride, gains respect and trust. It is the ability of the leader to communicate and build an emotional commitment to the vision. |
| ***Management by exception (active):*** Watches and searches for deviations from rules and standards, takes corrective action | ***Inspiration*:** Communicates high expectations, uses symbols to focus efforts, and expresses important purposes in simple ways. |
| ***Management by exception (passive*):** Intervenes only if standards are not met | ***Stimulation*:** leader's ability to influence the thinking and imagination of the followers. Promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving |
| ***Laissez-faire*:** Abdicates responsibility, avoids making decisions. | ***Individualism*:** Gives personal attention, treats each employee individually, coaches, advises. |

(Adapted from Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005, p. 560)

These distinctions indicate that transactional leadership differs from transformational leadership. From these distinctions, Bass refers to transformational leadership as the four I's: 'Idealised influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, and Individualised consideration.' This agrees with a research analysis of twenty (20) studies on transformational leadership which shows that it is associated with these qualities: charisma/vision/inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Leithwood et al., 1996, p. 828). These constitute the four primary behaviours associated with transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Mullins, 2002; Leithwood et al., 1999; Wood, 2005; Odom & Green, 2003; Oluremi, 2008; Harris et al., 2003).

According to Burns, "Transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (cited in Day et al., 2000, p. 15). This definition shows that it represents the transcendence of self-interest by both leader and led. Burns sees the transformational leaders as one who changes the outlook and behaviour of followers thus:

1. Relying on stimulating their followers by articulating and focusing a vision and mission.
2. Creating and maintaining a positive image in the minds of followers, peers, and superiors.
3. Exhibiting a high degree of confidence in themselves and their beliefs.



4. Setting challenging goals for followers.
5. Providing a personal example for followers to emulate.
6. Showing confidence in and respect for followers.
7. Behaving in a manner that reinforces the vision and mission of the leaders.
8. Possessing a high degree of linguistic ability and non-verbal expressiveness (Adapted from House et al., 1988, pp. 100-101).

This means that transformational leaders serve as an independent force in changing the makeup of followers' motive, outlook, and behaviour (Krishnan, 2005).

Hence, the advocates of transformational leadership see the leader as a cheerleader, enthusiast, wanderer, dramatist, coach, facilitator, and builder (Odom & Green, 2003). Bass (1985) built on Burns' (1978) work to describe transformational leadership in terms of the impact that it has on followers. Transforming leaders convert followers to leaders and move them to go beyond their own self-interest for the good of the larger entities to which they belong (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). This suggests that transformational leadership encourages followers to reach beyond their self- interest to embrace a collective goal advocated by the leader, and turns followers into leaders (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005).

Furthermore, Burns characterizes transformational leaders as visionaries who challenge people to achieve

exceptionally high levels of morality, motivation, and performance (Kreitner, 2001). They do this by developing a vision for the organisation, developing commitment and trust among workers, and facilitating organisational learning (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Northouse, 2013). It is a process of engendering higher level of motivation and commitment among followers, and in this leadership model, the central focus of leadership must be commitments and capacities of organisational members. The emphasis is on generating a vision for the organisation and the leader's ability to appeal to higher ideals and values of followers, as well as to create a feeling of justice, loyalty, and trust (Stoll & Fink, 1996). This is linked to vision, which Gunter (2000) says is about building a unified common vision and interest between leaders and followers. Such a leader expresses confidence in the followers, emphasizes values with symbolic actions, leads by example and empowers followers to achieve the vision (Yukl, 2002). In terms of vision, research has shown that a leader's vision was most strongly related to attitudes, and that these attitudes play important roles, inducing outcomes such as organisational commitment (Krishnan, 2005). In the organisational sense, transformational leadership is about transforming the performance or fortunes of an organisation (Mullins, 2002; Barker, 2005; Stone et al., 2004).

Bass (1990) stipulates that this transcending beyond self-interest is for the group, organisation or society. In essence, transformational leadership is a process of building commitment to organisational objectives and then empowering followers to accomplish those objectives



(Yukl, 1998). Research carried out by Ozaralli (2003) indicates that a transformational leader plays a role in empowering followers by enabling them to take on responsibilities. It is about leading by communicating a larger purpose and energizing and supporting followers, so that they contribute more than that which is required to satisfy the transactional or contracted obligations of their position (Northouse, 2004). Transformational leadership is essential for autonomous schools (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992). Here, the leader strives to gain the commitment of their followers.

To achieve a clearer understanding of this process, Cardona (2000) makes a distinction between pseudo-transformational leaders and authentic transformational leaders, thus:

> *Pseudo-transformational leaders are ethically questioned because they appeal to emotions rather than to reason, and may manipulate followers' ignorance in order to push their own interests. On the other hand, authentic leaders are engaged in the moral uplifting of their followers, share mutually rewarding visions of success, and empower them to transform those visions into realities (p. 201).*

In analysing these differences, the above assertion indicates that authentic transformational leadership requires an enduring change in followers' values and self-concept. Moreover, a mere change in the followers' affective outcomes will be pseudo-transformational leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

People like Kreitner see transformational leadership as the same thing as charismatic leadership. Charismatic leadership transforms employees to pursue organisational goals over self-interest: charismatic leaders transform followers by creating changes in their goals, values, needs, beliefs, and aspirations (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Leaders who transform are good at establishing and communicating values, beliefs, aims and direction, and have a strong sense of vision (Leask & Terrell, 1997,). In this light, Cardona, (2000) says, "Transformational leader is a visionary and charismatic leader; able to persuade his or her collaborators to want what he or she wants" (p. 204). In evaluation, a transformational leader is, therefore, a transactional leader who is also charismatic because he or she pushes his or her collaborators to go further than what is formally demanded of them. So far, the literature indicates that transformational leadership needs to be charismatic and transactional in order to be successful (Cardona, 2000).

Transformational leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. The transformational leader looks for personal motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs and engages the full person of the follower. This serves to build a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders (Greenfield, 2004; Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Grace, 1995; Krishnan, 2004). A transformational leader attempts to instil in followers the ability to question standard modes of operation. They are capable of revitalizing organisations by tapping people's reservoir of creativity (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005).



It is obvious that this approach to leadership fundamentally aims to foster capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals on the part of leader and followers (Wallace & Poulson, 2003). Research has shown that transformational leadership is geared towards three fundamental goals:

1. Helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture.
2. Fostering teacher development.
3. Helping them to solve problems together more effectively (Leithwood, 1992).

Moreover, transformational leaders increase their workers' commitment by "recruiting" their self-concept through increasing the salience of certain identities and values, and to an organisational vision or mission that reflects those identities and values (Leithwood et al., 1994). This model has been globalised as a means by which principals may respond to the demands of reform to achieve appropriate and effective learning outcomes by turning the school into a 'high reliability learning community' (Leithwood, 1992). This is the leadership style of choice in unstable and uncertain times (Grace, 1995).

In examining the functions of transformational leaders, Leithwood and his colleagues develop a school model of transformational leadership and posit that transformational leadership in school may be associated with these activities:

- Setting directions (includes vision-building, goal consensus and the development of high performance expectation).
- Developing people (includes the provision of individualized support, intellectual stimulation and the modelling of values and practices important to the mission of the school).
- Organising (culture-building in which colleagues are motivated by moral imperatives and structuring, fostering shared decision-making processes and problem-solving capacities).
- Building relationships with the school community (Leithwood et al., 1999; Leithwood &Jantzi, 2009).

The inclusion of the school-community factor moves Leithwood and his colleagues' work beyond the previous notion of transformational leadership, recognizing that this forms a core part of effective leadership. These four elements highlight the links between the leadership and the culture of the organisation. It also means that the leader has the ability to influence the culture of the organisation in which the people work. Hence, Hopkins, (undated) asserts, "Transformational leaders not only manage structure, they purposefully seek to impact upon the culture of the school in order to change it" (p. 2). Moreover, transformational leadership model is very comprehensive because it ensures a normative approach to school leadership which stresses the process by which leaders seek to influence school outcomes (Bush, 2008). This model is more consistent with school improvement literature, and it stresses change process and school culture.



Such leader emphasizes change process, engage teacher commitment to a shared vision, and model their culture and beliefs through leadership by example (Stoll & Fink, 1996; Northouse, 2013).

Studies have shown that there is a link between transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness, innovativeness, quality improvement, and both subjective and objective ratings of performance and organisational productivity (Bass, 1990; Gomez-Mejia et al., 2005; Hautala, 2006). In all, transformational leadership has conceptually encapsulated instrumental and transactional or instructional leadership. Hence, Bass maintains that the best leaders are those who combine both transformational and transactional approaches because transformation leadership can augment the effect of transactional behaviour (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). In this connection, Ken Leithwood, one of the world's foremost researchers on school leadership, agrees with Bass and Avolio (1993) that the transformational leadership needs to build upon transactional leadership (Day et al., 2000; Northouse, 2013).

Furthermore, research has led to an understanding that principals and others interested in systemic change need to adopt a new style of leadership- facilitative or transformational leadership (Ozaralli, 2003). This style of leadership encourages participation and replaces leading by control with leading through support (Perez et al., 1999). A study by Leithwood (1992) indicates that principals who employ transformational leadership work interdependently with teachers, parents, and community

members; develop leadership abilities, and encourage active participation in reshaping the school. Also, research has shown that transformational leadership involves the building of school culture or promoting culture behaviours that contribute directly to school improvement. The leader builds school culture by ensuring behaviours aimed at developing school norms, values, beliefs and assumptions that are student-centred and support continuing professional development (Harris et al., 2003).

Empirically, researchers have evidence of the effect of transformational leadership in school setting thus:

- Marks and Printy (2003) reported significant contributions to classroom instruction of both instructional and transformational approaches to leadership on the part of principals.
- Leithwood and his colleagues found that transformational school leadership practices show a small but significant amount of variation on students' engagement in school (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).
- Silins et al. (2000) found significant contributions of transformational leadership to both student and organisational learning in schools.
- Geijsel and her colleagues (2003) reported significant effects of such leadership on teachers' levels of effort and commitment (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009, p. 48).

However, transformational leadership is not without its criticisms. The concept itself has been misconstrued. As Foster (1989) argues:



> *…the concept has been denuded of its original power; transformational leaders are now those who can lead a company to greater profits, who can satisfy the material cravings of employees, who can achieve better performance through providing the illusion of power to subordinates. Transformational leadership has gone from a concept of power to a how-to manual for aspiring managers. (cited in Gunter, 2001, p. 98)*

For Foster, there is a shift in what makes a transformational leader. It is not just performance; it is the ability to harness what is available to bring about change in an organisation like school. Though these conceptions of leadership are subjects of research, reality in schools is significantly different. This agrees with the view of Southworth (1994) that, "while these categories help us to classify heads as transactional or transformational, they do not capture the character and nature of leadership in action" (p. 18). They are too abstract and omit the vigorous quality of headteachers at work (Hopkins, 2001). It is further criticized as too individualistic and being a vehicle for control over teachers and more likely to be accepted by the leader than the led (Chirichello, 1999; Bush, 2008; Hoyle & Wallace, 2005; Wood, 2005). Supporting this fact, Gunter (2001) argues that "transformational leadership isn't really transformational at all but is a 'top-dog theory that meets the needs of management control" (p. 23). Instead, emphasis should be placed on involving staff, encouraging their commitment, encouraging dispersal of discretion and responsibility and placing the highest value on continual learning, creativity, and innovation.

In addition, against the assertion that transformational leadership has a universal effect on followers, Mannheim and Halamish (2008), in a study carried out among 890 cadets, submit that the impacts of transformational leadership style are applicable to one particular context, and not universal. In addition, the climate in which schools have to operate, where leaders are expected to adhere to government prescriptions, raises questions as to the validity of transformational leadership. A controlled educational system reduces the possibility of realizing a genuinely transformational leadership (Bottery, 2001). In all, Hopkins (2001) maintains that transformational leadership "lacks a specific orientation towards student learning that is a key feature to this specific approach to school improvement" (p. 118). For him, it is necessary but not good enough for school improvement. This means that leaders need to combine both instructional and transformational leadership styles to enhance school improvement.

Finally, this review has investigated the different leadership styles that are relevant to the school setting by taking account of the literature and findings. It shows that there is no perfect style of leadership since all have advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, there is a need for leaders to combine different leadership styles in schools (Hopkins, 2001).

**Leadership Styles and Student Achievement**

Leadership styles can broadly be classified into three: autocratic, laissez-faire, and democratic (DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011; Yusuf, 2012),



though more recently, research has shifted to leadership styles like transactional, transformational, distributed, and instructional leadership (Hallinger & Lee, 2013; Leithwood et al., 1996; Leithwood & Janzi, 2008; Northouse, 2013; Yusuf, 2012). The use of various leadership styles by school leaders is defined by situations and context (Day, 2004; Hallinger, 2011; Northouse, 2013; Northouse, 2014; Robertson & Miller, 2007; Yusuf, 2012). However, scholars are not conclusive of the appropriate leadership styles that are capable of impacting on student achievement irrespective of the situation, context, and leadership personalities (Hallinger, 2011; Northouse, 2013; Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa, & Nwankwere, 2011). Some scholars argued that the influence of leadership styles on organisational success is dependent on the environmental factors and the situations (Hallinger, 2011; Itaman, 2007; Northouse, 2013; Obiwuruet al., 2011). In this sense, Hersey and Blanchard (2008) and Hallinger (2011) argued that there is nothing like the best leadership style; rather scholars should concern themselves with the appropriate leadership style for a specific situation and context. They maintained that the more leaders use the appropriate style for a context, the more effective they become and achieve organizational goals (Hersey & Blanchard, 2008).

Leadership style is found to influence leadership behaviour in the school and school success (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Yusuf, 2012). In a quantitative study on the influence of leadership styles on student achievement in secondary schools in Nigeria, with data collected from 50 principals, Yusuf (2012) found that the leadership styles

adopted by principals in the study were informed by their assumptions about human beings, human ways of learning, the context, and human nature. These assumptions often form the basis of decision-making and leadership behavior in the school (Yusuf, 2012). The study further observed that democratic leadership style employed by the principal influenced school success, motivated the teachers, and the school achievements. The findings suggest that appropriate leadership style enhances school performance and decision-making process.

Principals' leadership style influences the decision-making process in the school (Yulk, 2005). In corroboration, Avolio and Bass (2002) identified transactional, transformational, autocratic, democratic, and laissez-fair as styles that are capable of influencing the decision-making process in the organisation. Democratic and distributive styles are characterized by coordination, collaboration, and cooperation (Yusuf, 2012). Distributed leadership theory holds that leadership leads to organisational success when "shared across various members of the organisation in accordance with contextual variables, needs, interests, and abilities" (Lindahi, 2007, p. 325). In corroboration, Masewicz (2010) found in a qualitative study on school principals' practices in challenging context that principals who distributed their leadership and shared responsibilities were more likely to succeed in disadvantaged areas. Yulk (2005) argued that autocratic leadership style does not allow participation in the decision-making.



Leadership style has been found to be related to student achievement (Yusuf, 2012). In analyzing the impact of leadership style on student achievements with a quantitative approach, involving 50 principals from secondary schools in Osun State selected with simple random sampling and in employing descriptive analysis of the survey data, Yusuf (2012) found that autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles did not significantly impact on student achievement. Autocratic leadership has the tendency to discourage the teachers' performance and does not promote school improvement (Yusuf, 2012). However, the findings showed a significant relationship between democratic leadership style and student achievement (Yusuf, 2012). Analysis of the findings suggests that such leadership style encourages initiatives among teachers and students; it builds teamwork that impacts on student achievement (Yusuf, 2012).

In expanding the possible conceptual frameworks of leadership, Bass (1985) added transactional and transformational leadership styles. Transactional leadership is a process of clarifying structures, roles, responsibilities and relationships and getting things done on the basis of a straightforward exchange between leaders and followers (Aspinwall, 1998; Itaman, 2007; Leithwood 1992; Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). It developed initially out of a social exchange perspective, emphasizing the implicit social exchange that existed between leader and followers. There are four fundamental characteristics of transactional leadership:

1. Leader utilizes contingent rewards in motivating employees.

2. Leaders exercise corrective action when followers fail at meeting performance goals.
3. The followers look up to and depend on the leader.
4. It entails delegating tasks to followers that must be completed (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Northouse, 2014).

Transformational leadership has been referred to as using the four I's: Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, and Individualized consideration (Bass, 1990). A research analysis of 20 studies on transformational leadership observed that it is associated with these qualities: charisma/vision/inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Leithwood et al., 1996; Harris et al., 2003; Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013; Oluremi, 2008). Bass (1990) built on Burns' work to describe transformational leadership in terms of the impact that it has on followers. Transformational leadership stresses the empowerment of teachers as leaders, building capacity and commitment to change among the teachers (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008; Leithwood & Janzi, 2008; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). In a quantitative study of how teachers experience principal leadership, Walstrom and Louis (2008) found that transformational leadership behaviors impact positively on school climate, teacher efficacy, and student achievement. In corroboration, Leithwood and Sun (2012) found in a meta-analysis of the literature on transformational school leadership that transformational leadership style had moderate positive effects on teacher behaviors, student achievement, and school climate. Finally, the analysis of the literature suggests that distributive and transformation leadership styles tend to impact positively on school effectiveness and student achievement (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Masewicz, 2010; Walstrom & Louis, 2008).

# Chapter Four

## Catholic School Leadership

As religious institutions, Catholic schools base their leadership on the theological and philosophical principles. That is, its authority is based on the ethics of care and service, and theologically, it is based on man's relationship with God (Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, 2015; Jacobs, 2002). Most Catholic schools in Nigeria are managed by Catholic priests and religious sisters. Catholic schools are a major provider of qualitative education

service in many countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive (Cardak &Vecci, 2013). Students attending Catholic schools in Australia have been as many as 20% while the United States has 4% (2.16 million) of its students attending Catholic schools (Cardak &Vecci, 2013; Snyder & Dillow, 2012). In Nigeria, 24% of Nigerian children attend Catholic schools, and Catholic school provides quality education for the country (Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, 2015). There are situations where low-cost Catholic schools are established in poor villages to serve the needs of low-income families and poor children (Tooley, Dixon, & Olaniyan, 2005).

The uniqueness of Catholic school may be found in its service of care and community spirit (Odhiambo & Hii, 2012). In a qualitative study of stakeholders' perceptions of effective leadership in a Catholic school in Australia, with 50 participants (26 teachers, 12 students, and 12 parents) from one girls' high Catholic school in Sydney, Odhiambo and Hii (2012) observed that Catholic schools are unique because they provide a religious community within the learning community of the school. The study further found that the service of care and pastoral dimension of leadership prevail within the school (Odhiambo & Hii, 2012). Analysis of these findings suggests that the pastoral care includes regular prayers, the teaching of religious values, and social justice activities (Odhiambo & Hii, 2012).

Catholic schools' principals build teacher capacity and collaboration to succeed in disadvantaged areas (Imhangbe, 2011; Ojera & Yambo, 2014). Using a



qualitative study on the impact of school leadership on student achievement in Catholic schools in Nigeria, with data collected from 16 participants (4 principals and 12 teachers) from four Catholic schools, Imhangbe (2011) found that Catholic school principals exercised their authority and fostered democratic self-governance in such a way that the principals as instructional leaders empower the teachers through training. The study further suggests that an effective Catholic school principal focuses on the common good rather than a self-interest thereby exercising essential authority which enables them to excel in disadvantaged areas. Imhangbe (2011) observed that the principals adopt collaborative and distributed leadership, involve stakeholders in the management and leadership of the schools and impact on student achievement. The study suggests a link between leadership style and leadership effectiveness with a particular reference to distributive leadership style.

A Catholic school principal gives a unique dimension of school leadership, a dimension Cattaro and Cooper (2007) called "Spiritual leadership" (p. 76). In support of this assertion, Spesia (2016) observed that Catholic principals add the religious dimension to the array of their qualities, roles, and responsibilities. It is these spiritual and religious components of leadership that distinguish Catholic school leader from non-faith-based school leaders (Sergiovanni, 2009; Spesia, 2016).

Qualities of service and leading by example have been found among Catholic school principals (Cardak &Vecci, 2013; Valadez, 2013). Supporting these findings, Valadez

(2013) found in a mixed method study of leadership practices of Catholic school principals that promoted student achievement, with data collected from 50 principals through survey and interview from Archdiocese of Los Angeles that servant leadership style was prevalent among Catholic school principals. The study further observed that the principals created a culture of reading, hard work, academic success by celebrating students' achievements, and created Catholic identity through leading by example (Valadez, 2013).

In analyzing the spiritual leadership of Catholic school principals, scholars have listed the role of school principals in Catholic schools to include knowing the church documents and making them available to the school community, building spiritual development of the students, building the Catholic character in the students, teaching the children how to pray, fostering religious education and gospel values, and providing charitable services to the community (Augenstein & Konnert, as cited Imhangbe, 2011; Spesia, 2016; Valadez, 2013). These roles of school leaders suggest that Catholic school leaders are not only expected to be experts in school management and instruction but to be strong and unshakable forces and resources in developing and building the future of the children with faith and moral character (Cook & Durow, 2008; Spesia, 2016).

Finally, the principal needs to have two level qualifications to run and manage Catholic school in Nigeria. First, the principal needs to meet the requirement of the church of having the Catholic faith to build and sustain Catholic



character in the school (Imhangbe, 2011). Also, the principal needs to meet the required qualifications as prescribed by the national policy on education and ministry of education in Nigeria (Imhangbe, 2011). These demands on Catholic school principals merit examining their leadership behaviours that promote academic standard in disadvantaged areas.

**Catholic Schools and Servant Leadership**

The philosophy informing Catholic school leadership is service. Consequently, school leaders strive to serve in leading others. This agrees with the view of Greenleaf (1977) that true leaders are first servants and this he refers to as servant leadership. Servant leadership theory was propounded by a leadership guru, Robert Greenleaf (1977). According to Greenleaf (1977), servant means "Fully human ... functionally superior because he is closer to the ground- he hears things, sees things, knows things, and his intuitive insight is exceptional [and] because of this he is dependable and trusted" (p. 32). He sees an effective leader as a worthy servant. It suggests that a true leader is one whose leadership is born out of the desire to help and serve others. Such leaders have the desire to serve the people and support them to reach their highest potential. The practice of servant leadership has its root in world's great religions. The teaching of Jesus to His disciples has been seen by many scholars as a model and example of servant leadership (Ebener & O'Connel, 2010; Lanctot & Irving, 2010; Winston, 2004).

Catholic school leadership because of the theological undertone requires a leader to maintain an ethics of care

and service. The above definition of servant suggests that a leader must have the quality of humility in order to practise ethics of service and put the needs of others first before personal needs in order to be a true servant leader. Hence, Greenleaf (2002) opined, "the servant-leader is servant first....It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 27). In corroboration, a mixed method study carried out among Catholic schools in Archdiocese of Los Angeles by Valadez (2013) found that most Catholic school principals see the work as a vocation rather than a job. Such principals see their work as their purpose in life. Consequently, it is a call to service, and they see themselves as servants and adopt servant leadership style.

The idea of leading by example and making sacrifice underline the concept of servant leadership. A principal who is a servant leader has the natural desire to serve and care for people, and also empower others to do the same. It suggests that a good leader initiates a vision, works out the structure and its implementation with the followers, and takes the risk of failure and chance of success (Greenleaf, 2003). The leader's position should be at the center, not at the top in any organisation (Greenleaf, 2002). Such positioning at the center will enable the leader to be in direct contact and control of the various aspects of the organization and the people in it.

In articulating the characteristics of servant leaders, Greenleaf (2002) stressed the need for the leader to have essential skills of understanding the needs of the people, to



heal the wounds caused by the conflict in the organization, to build capacity for the followers, and be an effective listener, to effectively lead as servant-leader. Subscribing to the caring behavior of the leader in meeting the needs of others, Spear (2010) argued that servant leadership is grounded in an ethical and caring behaviour of the leader, involvement of others in the decision-making process, and the improvement of the environment. In this understanding, Spear (2010) listed the 10 characteristics of servant leaders to include listening to followers and their inner voices, empathy toward others, ability to heal the relationship, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of the people, and community building (Spear, 2010; Parris & Peachey, 2013).

The first characteristic is listening; it allows the leader to receptively listen to what the people are saying and what is left unsaid (Spear, 2010). It requires listening intently to the inner voice, identifying the will of the people, and automatically responding to any problem. The second characteristic is empathy which involves making an effort to accept and understand the background and where the people are coming from and appreciate their talents and gifts uniquely (Spear, 2010). This is important in disadvantaged areas because the leader needs to empathize with the people and accept them as they are if such leader must win their followership. Close to empathy is healing which is the third characteristic. A servant leader needs to recognize the need to heal a broken relationship and strive for the wholeness of the people and self.

Additionally, awareness is another characteristic of servant leadership. Awareness of the environment and self will enable a leader to assess, appreciate, and understand the situation and view issues holistically (Parris & Peachey, 2013). It suggests that having a good awareness of what is happening in the school will enable the school leader to make the right decisions in good time and be able to convince others. The fifth characteristic is persuasion. The servant leader uses persuasion to convince the people to follow and comply instead of force. Spears (2010) argued that the fundamental difference between traditional leadership and servant leadership is persuasion over coercion. It suggests that servant leader builds consensus within groups through persuasion.

The sixth characteristic is conceptualization. The servant leader seeks to create and arouse the abilities to dream great dreams and thinks in broader and conceptual terms. Like instructional leader, it requires setting goals and objectives, and creating a vision and having the foresight to know the direction the school is heading. Servant leader creates a clear vision for the school, articulates the vision to the followers, builds shared vision, intelligently craft a path to achieve the vision, and guide the school into a new direction (Parris & Peachey, 2013). This is linked to the seventh characteristic, which is foresight. Foresight is the ability to intuitively understand the lessons of the past, the present realities, and possible outcome of future decisions (Spear, 2010; Parris & Peachey, 2013). Both Greenleaf (1977) and Spears (2010) see foresight as the central ethic of leadership that is rooted in an intuitive mind and insight. Foresight enables



a school leader to foresee the unforeseeable and work toward it.

The eight characteristic is the stewardship. It entails a leader's commitment to serving others' needs. A steward is open to the needs and desire of the people and makes an effort to meet such needs. Stewardship is linked to the ninth characteristic of commitment to the growth of the people (Spear, 2010). A good steward is disposed to helping others to grow personally, spiritually, and professionally. Finally, the tenth characteristic focuses on the community building. In helping others to grow, the leader contributes to the growth of the community (Spear, 2010). Creating a sense of community is vital in a school setting because it enhances collaboration, communication, and commitment among the members (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Like distributed leadership, servant leadership includes distribution of work, involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process, and building team spirit (Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

Servant leadership embodies essential components which include ethics, empathy, and community, and these are crucial to the philosophy of the Catholic education. Hence, Catholic school principals strive to create an enabling climate for the growth of both the teachers and students (Valadez, 2013). There is a correlation between servant leadership and positive school climate, which is deeply underscored by instructional leadership model (Black, 2010). In a mixed method study carried out by Black (2010) in Canada, findings indicated that where there is evidence of servant leadership, the climate was

perceived as positive, supportive, and collaborative. It suggests that if a Catholic principal must influence school climate to enhance student achievement, the leadership must be servant leadership (Valadez, 2013). The implication of this theory of leadership in Catholic schools is that it will promote the creation of enabling environment and climate for holistic growth for the students (Valadez, 2013). In this understanding, the study by Masewicz (2010) on principal leadership in a challenging context, found that the principals who impacted on student achievement in poverty area are those that practiced stewardship as a leadership style. It influenced the way work was distributed and carried out for the benefit of the school and students while conscious of the setting and the needs of the children. A servant leader takes an interest in serving teachers and students to support their potentials and academic growth (Masewicz, 2010). Servant leadership is a viable theory that is capable of improving organizations and the well-being of followers in challenging context (Parris & Peachey, 2013). So, what does the Catholic school leader do in challenging contexts?

# Chapter Five

## Leadership in Schools in Disadvantaged Areas

Poor children learn with difficulty compared to middle-class children and those from urban areas (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). Leading schools in disadvantaged context have proved problematic and difficult. In leading schools sited in poverty areas, Bacon (2008) recommended that a principal needs an understanding of the difference between the low socio-economic students and those from the middle and upper classes

to enhance the academic achievement. For 30 years, Bacon studied the impact of poverty on student achievement in New York and San Francisco and maintained that meeting the needs of children in poverty is capable of building confidence and enhancing students' performance at school (Bacon, 2008). Additionally, principals need to overcome the challenges of recruiting high-quality teachers, low parental involvement in the education of their children, and high mobility among students and teachers, in order to impact on student achievement (Penlington et al., 2008). A study by Reeves (2009) showed that such schools focus on and celebrate academic achievement by creating intervention programs for weak students. Analysis of literature suggests that in such schools, there is a clear evaluation and assessment process to improve standard (Reeves, 2009).

Successful principals in disadvantaged areas were found to create an enabling environment for instructional learning by carrying others along (Groves, 2016). In a qualitative study of leadership characteristics of rural principals and graduation rate in seven high schools, Groves (2016) found that principals who ensured high graduation rate had active listening ears, collaboration, promote a relationship between the school and community. The study further observed that in challenging rural schools, successful principals promoted teacher professional development, decision-making informed by data, and improved instructional learning environment in the school.



The principals in disadvantaged rural areas improve student achievement by understanding and appreciating the difference between student learning in poverty and those who live in middle and upper-class (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Bacon, 2008). Additionally, Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007) found that schools that have excelled in disadvantaged areas have a relevant vision and a mission statement that gave the school direction and stability in poverty and challenging situations. Such schools have strong stakeholders' collaboration, supervision of teaching and learning, a structured program, and maintain a good culture of learning (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). In a mixed method study on principal behaviour in rural poverty areas, Masewicz (2010) found that successful principal made a connection and involved parents in the management and issues in the schools to make them welcome and not alienated. The study further observed that principals immersed themselves in the situation, showed resilience, and created and communicated the vision to all stakeholders (Masewicz, 2010).

Motivating the staff and celebrating high-achieving students have been found as strategies used by effective principals (Hagel, 2014; Yelland et al., 2008). Supporting these findings, Hagel (2014) found in a qualitative descriptive case study on the roles of the principal in enhancing the performance of students living in poverty, with descriptive analysis of data collected from five principals that the principals who improved student achievement consciously recognized and appreciated the efforts to study by acknowledging students' successes in

front of parents, teachers, and peers. The principals, who were found to give compliments, praise, and acknowledgment, tend to motivate both staff and students and reinforce positive behaviors for more productivity (Hagel, 2014). Also, the study showed that effective leaders in disadvantaged areas shared their vision with stakeholders and carried everybody along, and modeled pedagogy (Hagel, 2014). These findings corroborate findings of a study by Yelland et al. (2008) that found that successful principals model pedagogy and promote effective teaching and learning process to enhance student achievement in poverty environment. The findings suggested that effective principal was involved in setting the direction and redesigning the instructional process (Yelland et al., 2008).

## Improvement Strategies for Schools in Disadvantaged Areas

Meeting and sustaining educational standards are the core policy of many countries. There is the expectation that all secondary schools must meet the minimum standard in term of student academic performance. The schools failing to meet this standard and those serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities are considered as schools facing challenging circumstances or failing schools (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Herman, 2008). Failing schools are low performing schools needing improvement, help, and intervention (Brown, 2012; Duke, 2006). Low performing schools are characterized by poor facilities, ineffective leadership, unqualified teachers, and disinterested students (Ayodele, Buari, & Oguntuase, 2016; Brown, 2012; Ehisuoria & Aigbokhaebho, 2014).



Scholars have argued that performance measures such as school result are not a sufficient indicator to show that a school is facing challenges (Chapman & Harris, 2004). Hallinger et al. (1996) considered the instructional organization as one of the key mediating variables in assessing leadership impact on student achievement. In their principal effect model, they considered school context as an essential factor in determining the principal effect on school success and student achievement (Hallinger et al., 1996; Masewicz, 2010).

There is a need to consider the context, environment, socio-economic status, parental education, and availability of infrastructure (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Gardner, 2010). In a study on the strategies for improving schools in difficult and challenging contexts in the United Kingdom, Chapman and Harris (2004) found that the first strategy for school improvement in challenging context is by improving the environment. Focusing on infrastructural development will signal to stakeholders and parents that the school is changing and improving (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Gardner, 2010). The principal enhances positive school climate in poor rural areas by creating an enabling environment through the provision of basic facilities that are maintained and used effectively to promote student achievement and school success (Gardner, 2010; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). In corroboration, Thapa et al. (2013) found in a meta-analysis of school climate research that provision of basic facilities enhanced school climate and improved teaching and learning process.

Focusing on student achievement was a strategy found among school leaders who succeeded in disadvantaged areas (Leithwood, 2010; Thapa et al., 2013). In a meta-analysis of articles published within a decade on exceptional, effective practices that helped in closing achievement gap, Leithwood (2010) found in 31 studies that the leadership and district focused on student achievement. They developed wide, strong and shared beliefs and vision on student achievement and made an effort to include in the school vision a clear concept of closing the achievement gap and raising the achievement bar. The study further found the schools created student performance standards, use evidence and data for planning, engaged in the professional development of the teachers, and organisational learning to promote student achievement (Leithwood, 2010).

The principals in disadvantaged areas have been found to be proactive as a strategy in encouraging partnerships in meeting school needs (Norviewu-Mortty, 2012). In a qualitative case study of principals' strategies for academic improvement in disadvantaged rural areas in Ghana, which involved four schools, with two high-achieving and two low-achieving school, Norviewu-Mortty (2012) found that successful principals exhibited positive personal attributes and proactive school and community partnership in getting resources to meet the instructional needs and physical development of the schools. Norviewu-Mortty (2012) further observed that Parents Teachers Association (PTA) was involved in the structural development of the school and the recruitment and teachers support program, and the rural schools were



found to practice collegial leadership to succeed in poverty areas. These findings suggest that considering the challenges and lack of fund in disadvantaged areas, principals need to seek the support and collaboration of stakeholders to achieve success.

Principals who have been found to be successful in disadvantaged context built a quality networking and close tie with parents and the community (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2010; Waltstrom & Louis, 2008). As a strategy, the principal needs to build a link with the host community (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Research suggests that creating a sense of community within the school and relationship with the local community will gain support and loyalty in difficult times (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Rajbhandari, 2011; Wagner et al., 2010).

Ensuring discipline among students and student intervention are essential in improving student performance in disadvantaged areas (Brown, 2013). In a quantitative study of leadership practices used by principals to improve student achievement in high-poverty areas, with data collected from 304 principals, Brown (2012) found that principals used collaboration, curriculum alignment, discipline, and emphasis on attendance as effective strategies to improve student performance in high-poverty. In the study, Brown (2012) further observed that principals studied adopted student intervention and setting a high expectation for the students as strategies for success in disadvantaged areas.

As an instructional leader, Hallinger and Lee (2013) advocated that a principal in a disadvantaged school needs a thorough supervision of teaching and learning process. This will ensure that the lesson is structured, appropriate delivery of the curriculum, and effective assessment of the process of learning (Ahmed, 2016; Chapman & Harris, 2004; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Additionally, research has suggested that there is a need for schools to engage in a continuous professional development of the teachers to hone their skills and improve productivity (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Wagner et al., 2010).

Purposeful and stable leadership is essential in managing and improving schools in disadvantaged areas (Kunzle et al., 2010; Merritt, 2016). In corroboration, Chapman and Harris (2004) observed that schools in difficult circumstances might suffer from lack of direction without firm and purposeful leadership. In their study, Ylimaki et al. (2007) observed that effective principals in a challenging context provided support for staff, they were creative and flexible. The principals modelled best practices in instructional issues, redesigned the school structure, policies, and encouraged collaboration (Ylimaki et al., 2007). Analysis of these findings suggests that the principals did not allow the poverty condition to determine the success of the schools rather they were passionate about making a difference irrespective of the challenges (Ylimaki et al., 2007).

There is a link between poverty and student success (Mulford et al., 2008). Supporting this finding, Mulford et al. (2008) found in a qualitative case study carried out in



21 successful schools in a disadvantaged setting in Australia that poverty negatively influences the standard of education. To achieve and sustain student achievement in schools in high poverty areas, Mulford et al. (2008) recommended that the principal needs to make the teachers put in more effort than 'normal.' The implication is that teachers and principals will need to work harder and be more committed than their counterparts in more favourable settings. The findings further indicated that schools that succeeded in challenging contexts demonstrate some elements of distributed leadership, instructional leadership, students' participation and engagement, positive school culture, continuous professional development, and parents' involvement (Mulford et al., 2008).

Research indicated that the possible steps in advancing and succeeding in a disadvantaged area would be to create a safe, secure, and child-centered environment for learning (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Ylimaki et al., 2007). Thapa et al. (2013) and Ylimaki et al. (2007) observed that the principals who impacted on student achievement in high poverty areas showed some degree of commitment, passion, and leadership skills. Principals promote student achievement by giving time to instruction, having clear achievement goals, high expectations for the students and motivation for both teachers and students (Thapa et al., 2013; Ylimaki et al., 2007).

Finally, the above analysis of literature suggests that principals improve student achievement by creating an enabling and safe environment for learning (Hitt &

Tucker, 2016; Lambert, 2002). It suggests that the principal needs to have the required knowledge, skills, strategies, and leadership tools to enhance positively and impact on student achievement (Thapa et al., 2013). These above leadership responsibilities align with Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) four core leadership practices framework adopted in this study in terms of setting direction, developing the people, redesigning the organization, and managing the instructional program.

**Summary**

This chapter focused on current studies on Catholic leadership in a high-poverty area by identifying the essential descriptions, practices, and behaviours of a successful school principal in disadvantaged rural areas that have been commonly accepted. Through the review of theories, practices, and high performing schools in poverty areas, the literature suggested that many scholars agreed that the principal's leadership has an impact on student academic achievement and school success. The literature showed that there is a nexus between poverty and the educational success of students, and the need to improve low-performing schools in disadvantaged areas.

Literature suggested the necessity for a Catholic school principal to create and build an effective school that could impact on student achievement. However, many scholars are divided on the manner and ways effective principals positively influence student achievement, and which specific leadership style(s) is more likely to impact on student achievement.

# Chapter Six

## Leadership Training

Are leaders born or made? We do not debate whether leaders are born or made. No doubt, leadership capacity has its roots partly in genetics, partly in early childhood development, and partly in adult experience (Northouse, 2013; McCauley &Velsor, 2004; Elmuti et al., 2005). A number of researchers in this area indicate that effective leaders are results of both inherent traits and carefully developed skills (Bergner,

2008). There is an increasing understanding that all leadership skills need training for effectiveness. Those who have natural leadership qualities shaped them through learning processes (Avolio, 2005). There is an implied acknowledgement there that 'doing what comes naturally' which is based on innate qualities will not always be suitable, and it means for more effectiveness, one needs training (Williams et al., 2003). Therefore, to be effective, school leaders need professional development and training to improve their skills. Currently, there is a strong emphasis on leadership preparation through formal professional development and training across the world. In this chapter, this study seeks to investigate the concept of leadership training, the duration, content, and quality of the training, and its relationship with leadership effectiveness and performance.

Leadership training is a process of educating the future school leaders in the basic requirements and skills needed for effective leadership at schools (Arikewuyo, 2009). Considering the concept of leadership training, Bolam (2003) asserts that leadership development is:

> *… an on-going process of education, training, learning and support activities taking place in either external or working-based settings (cited in Earley & Jones, 2009, p. 168).*

This training should cover the key areas of competences of the leader. There are four clusters of competences that principals should have as articulated by Oduro (2003) and this is stated in Table 6.1.



Table 6.1: *The four clusters of competences for principals*

| | **Cluster** | **Competence Indicator** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Administrative capacity | Ability to keep school records, e.g. maintaining school finance records, keeping admission records, the log book, and filing documents. |
| 2 | Professional capacity | Ability to manage pupil assessment, knowledge of teacher appraisal techniques, knowledge of pupil teaching techniques, skills for teaching adults, the ability to vet teachers' lesson notes, knowledge about leadership, skills for managing people, acquisition of higher academic knowledge, the ability to counsel. |
| 3 | Personal capacity | Fairness and firmness, tolerance, patience, commitment to work. |
| 4 | Interpersonal capacity | Ability to relate well with staff, pupils, parents, the school management, and circuit officers. Ability to promote teamwork, ability to conduct successful staff meetings, and possession of lobbying skills. |

(Adapted from Oduro, 2003, p. 211)

This cluster of competence seeks to reshape a leader into a professional and effective leader. Unfortunately, many countries like Nigeria have no institution designed for school leadership training for future leaders, and this has affected the performance of many school leaders (Arikewuyo, 2009). Inadequate preparation and improper training have hindered good performance by school leaders (Su et al., 2003). The inefficiencies of the principals have been linked with lack of professional training in school leadership (Obemeata, 1984). Like Nigeria, the training of principals across Canada and many other countries tends to be an "informal, ad hoc, essentially uncoordinated approach" (Hansford and Ehrich, 2005). However, there are some countries where the training of principals is formal.

Principal Training and Preparation in other countries:

1. Hong Kong: Considering the inefficiency of the principals in Hong Kong, in 1991, the government and the education department proposed that "all principals and potential principals must undertake a needs assessment, an attitudinal and paradigm change and attend core modules including learning and teaching; human resources development; financial management; strategic management, and school administration" Arikewuyo, 2009, p. 6). Today, all potential school leaders have to undertake this training and obtain a certificate, and serving principals are expected to attend training courses after three years of service (Arikewuyo, 2009).



2. Singapore: In 1985, the Ministry of Education designed a formal training and preparation program for potential principals. They were required to attend a leadership-training course that leads to Diploma in Education Administration, designed and conducted by the Institute of Education. The prospective principals are identified and groomed. As a teacher, an aspirant must show that he or she has leadership qualities which will be confirmed by the principal and consequently recommend such candidates for the formal training program.

3. United Kingdom: In 1998, the former Prime Minister Tony Blair announced the establishment of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) which took off in November, 2000 (Earley & Jones, 2009; Riley & Mulford, 2007). It is designed to develop world-class school leaders, system leaders and future leaders for schools. The NCSL has been organizing various courses for potential school leaders, which has greatly influenced efficiency in school leadership (National College for School Leadership, 2008). The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is now the mandatory qualification for headship in the UK (National College for School Leadership, 2005). It is on record that England is leading the world in this leadership training (Dunford et al., 2000).

4. Sweden: There are four different training programs for school leaders:

- A recruitment training program for persons who wanted to become principals. This training gives a broad view of different school leadership functions but retains a focus on the national goals for education.
- An introductory training program - to help new principals during their first years in office.
- A National headteachers training program - for principals after two years in office
- A continuation school leader program – university courses for school leaders (Johansson, 2004).

Dadey and Harber (1991) quoted a 1990 study of 31 African countries as concluding that only three countries have comprehensive training programs in educational planning, administration, and leadership. In those areas where training was provided, it was regarded as inadequate, unsystematic, no follow-up, and not meeting the needs of the people.

The Federal Military Government of Nigeria, in 1992, established the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in Ondo State. This provided professional training to all heads of schools. Nonetheless, a look at the 2008 and 2009 program of the Institute shows that it only organizes a-two or three-day workshops and seminars for principals and other educational leaders (Arikewuyo, 2009). This is insufficient for the proper training of school heads. There is a need for the NIEPA to develop training modules and organise resident long-term training programs and courses for



aspiring school principals that could lead to a certificate in leadership. In agreement with this assertion, Day (2003) suggests that there should be management training linked to certification, and such certification should be a pre-requisite for appointment to managerial positions in schools. Nigeria should not be content with the training of teachers; effort should be made in training the school leaders.

***Duration of the Training*:** Where training is available, some principals attend only a month's in-service course on school management (Arikewuyo, 2009). Such short training hardly has an impact and is less motivating to trainees since it does not lead to certification and salary improvement. In addition, the training is often organized at the wrong time, after the appointment. It should have preceded their appointment as principals. In discussing the duration of the training, Gomez-Mejia et al. (2005) assert that one month's full-time training would be suitable.

***Quality and Content of Leadership Training Program:***
The content of educational leadership programs in developed countries can be summed up thus:

> *Most courses focus on leadership, including vision, mission and transformational leadership, give prominence to issues of learning and teaching, often described as instructional leadership, and incorporate consideration of the main task areas of administration or management, such as human resources*

> *and professional development, finance, curriculum and external relation.* (Bush & Jackson, 2002, pp. 420-421).

In this light, research carried out by Bush and Heystek (2006) shows that most principals want training in finance and human resource management to enable them to perform effectively. Literature indicates that the preparation program for prospective school principals should include the foundation knowledge in allied courses in psychology, child development, adolescent psychology, sociology, philosophy, measurement, administration and organization, planning (Nwagwu et al., 2004). In the same way, Aderounmu and Ehiametalor (1981) add, "the preparation program should include, sociology, economics, social psychology, political science, and anthropology" (p. 101). They further recommend in-service training in the form of workshops, conferences, and seminars for school leaders, in co-operation with Colleges and Universities.

Findings from the study by Adesina (1990) show that future school leaders should be schooled in these areas:

1. A broad liberal education with a degree in humanities, the social sciences, or the sciences.
2. Training in the field of education in general.
3. An awareness of the nature of society and the forces affecting its change.

Some researchers have recommended eight induction strategies for new principals thus:



1. Assign a veteran principal to assist the new appointee.
2. Provide manuals for new principals.
3. Ensure a smooth transition by involving the outgoing principal.
4. Encourage networking with other principals.
5. Orient the new principal to the school and its community.
6. Encourage principals to allow their deputies to "shadow them to gain experience."
7. Visits to other schools.
8. Provide courses in educational management (Kitavi & Van der Westhuizen, 1997, pp. 261-262).

The American Association of School Administrators comments that there is a need for school leaders to develop skills in the following areas: "designing, implementing and evaluating school climate; building support for schools; development; allocating resources; as well as educational research, evaluation and planning" (Arikewuyo, 2009, p. 8). The literature indicates that leadership training should be based on communication skills, social skills, group processes and human relations (Brundrett, 1999) with such leadership focusing on critical thinking, emotional and cognitive development, and intra- as well as interpersonal skill development. Problem- solving and managing 'competing forces' must be seen as key components of leadership training if schools are to become high-achieving learning communities (Day, 2003). Moreover, individual requirements should be incorporated into the course program so that training may be made relevant to personal needs and personal context (Brundrett, 1999; Northouse, 2013).

In considering leadership formation, Gomez-Mejia et al. (2005) recommend the following areas for leadership training: communication, interpersonal, and performance management skills. Still considering the areas of formation, it is good to look at the content of the management training given to prospective headteachers in England and Wales, focusing on five key areas of leadership thus:

1. Strategic direction and development of the school.
2. Teaching and learning
3. Leading and managing staff.
4. Effective management and allocation of staff and resources.
5. Accountability (Brundrett, 1999, p. 5).

Considering the position and functions of the school leaders, Murgatroyd and Gray (1984) formulated the training program of school leaders thus:

> *Training for leadership cannot be normative, prescriptive, skill-based or problem-centred. Instead, it needs to focus on the personal and interpersonal qualities of the person. It needs to develop and sustain openness, empathy, and warmth and to encourage exchange, acceptance and exploration (cited in Coleman, 1994, p. 74).*

Since NCSL (2007) presents 'a core set of leadership practices that form the basics of successful leadership,' it demands then that the development and training of future leaders should be linked to the acquisition and refinement of the skills required to carry out such task effectively as listed below.



- Building vision and setting directions
- Understanding and developing people
- Redesigning the organization
- Managing the teaching and learning program (Bush, 2008, p. 126).

In all, examining the content of leadership training in some countries, one could draw a line along these similarities: Instructional leadership, educational law, finance, managing people, and administration (Bush, 2008).

***Methods and Processes of Leadership Development***

Lectures are needed in most skilled-based training because they are the most efficient way to deliver large amounts of information and theory. No matter how well done, however, lectures alone are never sufficient; there is also need for other activities such as role-playing (Sogunro, 2004). In this light, Mullen and Cairns (2001) argue that outside the formal training, there should be an internship (with mentors supporting novice leaders) as a way of helping new leaders learn the practical and necessary skills required for the job. They believe that formal programs of study need to include practical aspect most effectively experienced through mentoring. This is highly supported by the review of forty (40) research-based papers by Hansford and Ehrich (2005). Going through the review, they conclude that the programs for mentoring for principals are essential professional development for improving the learning and development for novices and experienced principals alike.

Leadership training program should expose participants to different teaching and learning approaches, and provide an opportunity to experience and reflect on them. Furthermore, management training needs to be practiced. Therefore, during the program, people should have the opportunity to practice, receive feedback and discuss with each other, since experiential learning is essential in the leadership training process (Williams et al., 2003; Karstanje & Webber, 2008). This training consists of excursions, pattern breakers, and shake-up exercises (Williams et al., 2003). A quasi-experimental study comparing indoor and outdoor leadership training showed no significant difference in the efficacy of the two types of training. They concluded that two training alternatives were likely to be equivalent (Keller & Olson, 2000).

Literature indicates that training programs for school leaders should provide opportunities for field experience in educational settings beyond students' familiarity (Hoff et al., 2006). Indeed, leaders should be trained in the area of social justice (Arikewuyo, 2009). This will broaden their perspectives and can be through student exchanges or partnerships with schools. Leadership preparation should focus concurrently on broad educational issues and the particularities of local contexts (Onguko &Abdalla, 2008; Huber, 2004). As the University of Washington says, "Quality leadership preparation programs must be organised around, and guided by an explicit set of values expressed in the program philosophy and working assumptions" (Sirontnik & Kimball, 1996, p. 191).



In considering the effectiveness of leadership training, Leithwood and Levin (2004) offer a framework for evaluating preparation programs. For them, the relationship between the programs, leadership practice and outcomes, should be considered from different aspects and levels to ensure effective evaluation. In all, the literature indicates that leadership training and its evaluation must be taken seriously to ensure effective leadership in schools.

### *Is There Any Nexus between Leadership Training and Leaders' Performance?*

The training of school principals is seen as a key to their effectiveness in school leadership (Harris & Townsend, 2007). A person who is trained in the required skills for a particular job is assumed to be able to perform to the standards set for the job (Thody, 1998). In a study conducted by Eyike (1981) among principals in secondary schools in Bendel State (now Edo and Delta States), two variables were tested with a mixed method approach:

1. Principals professional training.
2. In-service training.

Both were found to be significantly related to the effective performance of the principals' leadership roles in secondary schools. Another research showed that developing leader could have an impact on four levels: individual development; development of colleagues; whole-school development; and on students' outcome (Harris & Townsend, 2007). Research further underpinned that leadership preparation and training make a difference to the quality of the school. This is

underscored in a study carried out by Sackney and Walker's (2006) among new principals in the USA. They found that the principals were not prepared for the job, and consequently, they were not able to perform effectively. This is shown in the truism that without a "compass," the head all too easily gets into difficult waters (Bush, 2008).

This claim is further strengthened by the research carried out by Thody, Papanaoum, Johansson, and Pashiardis (2007), in it, they found a consensus that getting the right people into principalship matters as much as how you train them but that even a good leader can be improved through training. Again, in evaluating the National College for School Leadership 'New visions' program for new leaders in the UK, Bush et al. (2006), found a significant impact on the 430 heads involved in the first two cohorts of the program. In this connection, a study by Brown, Rutherford, and Boyle (2000) indicates that the training of school leaders often results in direct improvement in the classroom thereby raising students' performance and school standards. These studies suggest that there is a relationship between training and leadership effectiveness.

Finally, research and literature have shown that leadership training and development is gaining a global acceptance; though, in diversity, there is still common ground for leadership training across countries. The review of research has also revealed that the relationship between leadership training and leaders' performance is significant. Literature and research have established that training has a strong impact on the effectiveness of the leader in promoting school improvement.

# Chapter Seven

## Four Core Leadership Practices

Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) four core leadership practices necessary for school success and improvement are vital for today's school management. The four core practices are setting direction, developing the people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the instructional program (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Jacobson, 2011). The core leadership practices model has its root in transformational leadership studies by

Leithwood and colleagues including a study that explored the impact of transformational leadership on student outcomes (Leithwood, Tomlinson, & Genge, 1996); on student achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) and on student success (Sun & Leithwood, 2012). Jacobson (2011) submitted that Leithwood and Riehl's set of core leadership practices encapsulate the leadership practices that a school principal could employ to translate ideas into actions. In their study of core leadership practice, Thomas, Herring, Redmond, and Smaldino (2013) indicated that in demonstrating core leadership practices, school principals created shared meaning about the school vision and work towards achieving the vision.

Jean-Marie and Sider (2014), Handford and Leithwood (2013) and Jacobson (2011) suggested that Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) core leadership practices promote student achievement and school success. Using a qualitative approach, Jean-Marie and Sider (2014) explored the leadership practices and behaviors of eight Haitian school principals and found that the school leaders in developing states are confronted with the challenges of adopting policies and practices from the developed world that may not favor their contexts. Also, in their study of leadership practices teachers linked to leadership characteristics, Handford and Leithwood (2013) found that integrity, consistency, reliability, and competence were associated with teachers' perceptions of the principal's trustworthiness. Using Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) core leadership practices as a framework, Jascobson (2011) studied the relationship and impact of school leadership practices on student achievement.



Finally, in employing the core leadership practices, Thomas et al. (2013) found that school leaders create school vision, develop the staff for effectiveness in achieving the vision, and support staff in their activities. Each of these four core leadership practices will be examined in detail in the following section.

**Setting Direction**

Setting direction entails developing and communicating the school goals and the commonality of purpose (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). These actions require creating a common and compelling vision for the community, raising new expectations, ensuring the acceptance of goals, communicating these effectively to the followers, and monitoring the performance of the school (Day, 2012; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Petrides, Jimes & Karaglani, 2014). Leithwood and Riehl (2003) argued that providing direction for the people is a key function of the leader. This fundamental task is enshrined in the transformational leadership model, and Bass (1985) called it inspirational motivation, a practice that demands developing new opportunities, articulating, motivating, and inspiring the followers with the vision (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). There are some aspects of setting a direction that I will discuss in this book. They are identifying and articulating a vision, creating a high-performance expectation for the students and adults, and fostering acceptance of the school vision.

**Identifying and articulating a vision.** Schools need a well-defined school vision that articulates clear and

measurable goals that should focus on student academic progress (Gamage et al., 2009; Hallinger, 2013; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Stronge et al., 2008). Findings suggest that in framing and defining the vision, the school leader needs to ensure that it is understood, inspiring, uplifting, easy to communicate, and shared (Nagy & Fawcett, 2011; Stronge et al., 2008). Findings indicate that developing a clear vision and building commitment improves student achievement (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Masewicz, 2010). Supporting these findings, in a mixed method study carried out among Catholic schools in Archdiocese of Los Angeles to determine leadership practices that support student achievement,Valadez (2013) found that a well-articulated vision and mission aided successful Catholic school principals in leading the schools.

**Creating high-performance expectation for the students and adults.** In qualitative studies that examined successful principals in high-poverty schools in the USA, England, and Australia, Ylimaki, Jacobson, and Drysdale (2007) found that the principals set achievable goals, improved the physical environment, and created a sense of purpose. The study suggested that principals in the United States focused on the creation of safe environment and setting a high expectation for all students in challenging context while in England, school heads focused on directives and tasks in setting a vision for school improvement in failing schools and disadvantaged context (Ylimaki et al., 2007). The school leaders all made an effort to ensure cooperation and alignment of stakeholders to the principal's vision and value (Nagy & Fawcett, 2011; Petrides et al., 2014). Setting direction in



schools located in a disadvantaged context in Australia, Ylimaki et al.(2007) found that principals employed shared leadership and distributed leadership while striving to improve the physical school environment and student behavior. Creating a vision for a given school is one of the essential tasks of a school principal and crucial instrument for achieving effective incorporation and alignment of school activities to ensuring school success (Leithwood et al., 2006).

**Fostering acceptance of the school vision**. A school leader fosters the acceptance of the vision through an agreement on some key goals to achieve the vision (Leithwood et al., 2006). For the school goal to have motivational value, the school principal needs to lead the individual members to own the school vision, and this process requires fostering collaboration among staff in achieving a common goal (Leithwood et al., 2006). In this connection, Yang (2014) suggested that the school leader needs to craft the basic conditions to encourage the stakeholders to achieve common school objectives.

**Developing People**

Developing the people in the workplace for effectiveness depends on the school principal's trustworthiness and effectiveness (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). Developing the people entails building personal and mutual capacity for the teachers through intellectual stimulation and appropriate role models (Jacobson, 2011). Teaching is a profession that needs on-going professional development (Bifuh-Ambe, 2013), and teachers as essential resources in the school need professional development (Hodgman,

2012). Developing people entails giving the teachers intellectual capacity building and individualized support in the learning process (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005). This concept is well articulated in transformational leadership theory by Bass (1985) who indicated that transformational leadership has the four I's: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008) which suggest that the principals strive to develop people by influencing behavior towards achieving the set goals and use their practices to model the necessary behaviors for their followers (Jacobson, Johnson, Ylimaki, & Giles, 2005; Thomas et al., 2013). There are other aspects of developing teachers that are important to this book. They are providing intellectual stimulation, providing individualized support, and providing an appropriate role model.

**Providing intellectual stimulation**. School leaders offer an opportunity for teacher development and enhancement. Effective leaders focus on the capacity building of teachers so as to build their capacity and competency (Wagner et al., 2010; Pihie & Asimiran, 2014). Competency is described as "the repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning" (Wagner et al., 2010, p. 99). Staff development will be effective and beneficial if it is job-embedded, classroom-centered, continuous, and collaborative (Wagner et al., 2010). In a meta-analysis of peer-reviewed articles from 2000 to 2014 on leadership practices that have influenced student achievement, Hitt and Tucker (2016) found that there is a need for schools to engage in a continuous professional



development of the teachers to hone their skills, improve productivity, and sustain academic standards. School leaders could encourage the spirit of 'teachers as learners' to build capacity for the staff. This could be done through staff training, visits to other schools to gather best practices, and sponsoring teachers to conferences and seminars (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Ojo & Olaniyan, 2008).

**Providing individualized support**. School principals provide individualized support by knowing the needs of their followers or staff and raising them to another level of development (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). It gives followers sense of worth and self-actualization when given opportunities to apply acquired skills and knowledge. Building capacity is not only for skill acquisition to achieve school goal, but there is a need to build commitment and resilience in the work process, and dispositions to always use the skills (Leithwood et al., 2006). The principal gives individualized support by showing concern and respect for the staff and being mindful of their feelings and needs (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). Additionally, the school leaders show respect by recognizing the individual's roles and contributions towards achieving school goals (Handford & Leithwood, 2013).

Teachers' motivation and stimulation are crucial to effective productivity in the school. In corroboration, Ojera and Yambo (2014) found in their survey research that the quality of the principal's leadership determines the teachers' level of motivation and the quality of teaching in the classrooms. The role and approach of

principal in motivating the teachers is vital in ensuring school improvement and student achievement (Tan, 2012). In examining how principals motivate the teachers, Ahmed (2016) and Tan (2012) found that some principals motivate their staff through salary increment, praises, appreciations, encouraging initiatives, valuing people's contributions, building team relationships among the teachers, and developing an interest in the staff. These sources of motivation may determine the level of teachers' commitment to school goals (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010).

In carrying out intellectual stimulation, the school leader encourages teachers to look at their work from different perspectives, take intellectual risk, reassess assumptions, and rethink how to do better in their work for more effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2006). In brief, Leithwood et al. (2006) claimed it would lead to challenging the *status quo* in the system and other practices, and consequently, promote school success. Transformational leadership model articulates the practices and recommends it for school leaders, especially, leaders of schools in disadvantaged contexts (Leithwood et al., 2006).

**Providing appropriate role model.** Developing the staff requires a school leader to provide an appropriate model through leading by example (Ahmad et al., 2013; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Providing appropriate model suggests that a school leader must demonstrate some degree of transparency in the decision-making process, optimism, hope, confidence, resilience, and consistency in



the day to day activities (Leithwood et al., 2006). Findings indicated that successful school leaders modeled behavior that they considered essential in achieving school goals (Belcastro, 2015). Developing people further encompasses Bass's (1985) idealised influence because a leader exercises the influence when he/she serve as a model for behaviours of building trust and respect in the workers (Leithwood et al., 2006).

Finally, literature suggests that while principals in the United States tend to offer expert knowledge of the curriculum and instructional practices to teachers through professional development and modelling, the school leaders in the United Kingdom tend to give time and resources to the capacity building of their teachers, and Australian school leaders tend to use research-based intervention to improve teachers' performance (Hine, 2013;Ylimaki et al., 2007).

**Redesigning the Organization**

Redesigning the organisation has to do with the working conditions and situation in which the school operates. Increasing the motivation of staff will yield little impact without enabling working condition (Leithwood et al., 2006). Designing the school involves strengthening school cultures, removing hindrances to academic success, and building collaborative spirit among stakeholders (Jacobson, 2011). Building a positive collaborative culture and achievement-oriented cultures are essential to leadership success in disadvantaged context (Leithwood et al., 2006). The success of school activities is often determined by the levels of capacities, motivations, and

opportunities for collaborators to collaborate (Connoly & James, 2006; Ojera &Yambo, 2014). Building trust, open communication, and a good relationship are needed in fostering a collaborative culture (Hitt &Tucker, 2016). Distributed leadership that encourages participation is required to enhance school success in disadvantaged context (Leithwood et al., 2006). There are some essential aspects of redesigning the organisation that are relevant to school leadership, and they are: strengthening school cultures, building collaborative processes, and modifying organisational structures.

**Strengthening school cultures.** The principal enhances positive school climate by creating an enabling environment through the provision of basic facilities that are maintained and used effectively to promote student achievement and school success (Gardner, 2010; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Findings indicated that effective principals in high-performing schools create an enabling environment and set high expectations for staff and students while holding them accountable for learning (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). In building a positive culture, Ozgan (2011) and Odhiambo and Hii (2012) observed that an enabling environment where the staff can trust the organization and its leadership is important in motivating the teachers. Findings indicated that school that is not built on trust will not succeed (Ozgan, 2011). Similar to these findings, a qualitative study of the influence of principal leadership practices on student achievement in Catholic school, Imhangbe (2011) found that high-performing Catholic schools in Edo State maintained a healthy school culture where the relationship and interaction were cordial, trusted, and homely.



Literature suggests that effective leaders have a significant impact on school climate and culture, create safe and enabling learning environment for students to excel (Davos, 2009; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). In corroboration, in a qualitative case study on the influence of principal leadership on student academic achievement in high-poverty schools in California, Harri (2011) found that the school leaders created a safe, structured environment with enabling climate for students to learn and excel in a high poverty setting. The study further indicates that structure and systems, collaboration, and shared decision-making processes provide a climate of academic success in the school (Harri, 2011).

**Building collaborative processes.** In achieving the communal learning, Wagner et al. (2010) and Hands (2014) recommended that the school leaders need to encourage collaboration between teachers and professional learning communities, students learning in groups, and where teachers learn and share ideas. The school needs a collaborative leadership to promote change and development in the school. In analyzing the impact of effective dialogue with the teachers, Ojera and Yambo (2014) found that the principals could have a positive effect on teachers in terms of motivation, satisfaction, efficacy, sense of security, self-esteem, better instruction, and feeling of school support. School effectiveness requires the participation and involvement of the community and the stakeholders to bring about change in school development and student learning (Rajbhandari, 2011; Wagner et al., 2010). Therefore, Ahmed (2016) and Rajbhandari (2011) argued that the

school principals need to encourage the participation and involvement of the teachers, parents, and local groups in the school management.

In a qualitative study that explored the driving leadership styles that encourage participation and involvement of stakeholders in school development, Rajbhandari (2011) found that involving the staff in the leadership of the school will bring about a sense of responsibility and accountability among the staff. Also, Rajbhandari (2011) further found that staff participation brings ownership, use of initiative for tasks, commitment, and belongingness among workers. The study indicates that such involvement is capable of increasing the motivational level and stability among the teachers in a particular school (Rajbhandari, 2011). Additionally, school leaders build a relationship with the communities and get the support of the host communities and parents in the process of promoting school success (Leithwood et al., 2006; Rajbhandari, 2011; Wagner et al., 2010).

**Modifying organisational structures.** Hine (2013) claimed that it is important to carry out restructuring in the school to ensure improvement. As the culture is built, the necessary structures must be provided to hone productivity and success. Such structures include common planning time, teams, groups for problem-solving, teachers' involvement in decision-making, and practice of distributed leadership (Hands, 2014; Leithwood et al., 2006). In the process of designing, the school leaders facilitate the school activities and students' learning process; alter the school culture in achieving a



shared vision and goals (Jacobson et al., 2005; Ylimaki & Jacobson, 2013). In redesigning, the principal modifies the existing structures, encourages dialogue, creates professional collaboration among the staff, and change routine procedures (Ylimaki et al., 2007; Ylimaki & Jacobson, 2013).

**Management of the Instructional Program**

In managing the instructional program, an effective principal manages both the curriculum and the learning process in the classrooms (Ylimaki et al., 2007). In a multi-case-study of 13 challenging schools in the United States, Australia, and England of successful principals who made a difference in high-poverty areas, Ylimaki et al. (2007) found that the principals foster teacher leadership by living and modeling the appropriate behaviours and encouraging teacher leadership. Principals manage the instructional process by staffing the school, providing instructional support, supervision, and monitoring of teaching and learning, tracking student progress, and managing instructional time (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005). The principal has the responsibility of providing competent and qualified teachers for the school especially in rural poverty areas (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Focusing on instruction in disadvantaged context is essential in ensuring school success and student achievement.

Managing instruction comprises the three roles of the principal: supervision and evaluation of the instructional process, coordination of the curriculum, and monitoring of students' progress (Hallinger & Lee, 2013; Hitt &

Tucker, 2016). Effective principals are vital in influencing, facilitating, supporting, and impacting on teachers' classroom effectiveness and student achievement (Olaleye, 2013; Tan, 2012). Additionally, effective principal focuses and influences student achievement by deliberately changing classroom practices and adjusting the leadership arrangement in the school to improve teaching and learning (Odhiambo & Hii, 2012; Reitzug West, & Angel, 2008). The principal does this by clarifying and emphasizing learning goals, defining the learning purpose and outcomes, organising curriculum, monitoring students' progress and holding the students and teachers accountable for their works (Odhiambo & Hii, 2012; Tan, 2012).

In a quantitative study of the relationship between principals' leadership behaviour and school effectiveness in Nigeria, Ekundayo (2010) found that the school leader ensured proper curriculum and instructional supervision by carrying out classroom visits and inspecting all school documents. These findings are supported by a study on principals' performance of supervision of classroom instruction by Egwu (2015) that schools in which the principals visit classrooms and show instructional leadership seemed to improve more than schools where principals do not visit classrooms.

The principal as an instructional leader provides visible presence, instructional resource, and communication in the learning process (Imhangbe, 2011; Ojera &Yambo, 2014).Visibly monitoring what takes place in the teaching and learning by the principal, will enhance the learning



process and facilitate achievement of school goals (Stronge et al., 2008). Such principals ensured that rules and boundaries in the classrooms are defined, that teachers have access to the necessary materials for teaching, that teachers teach in line with lesson plans, and maximize the teaching time (Stronge et al., 2008). Effective learning requires the principal to ensure that teachers prepare the lessons and make good use of classroom time (Ahmed, 2016; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Nwagwu et al., 2004). Ensuring that teachers manage their time is essential because maximization of teaching time is crucial to effective teaching and learning at school (Ahmed, 2016; Nwagwu et al., 2004). Focusing on classroom instruction is capable of promoting and improving school success (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). This position is strongly supported by the findings from a case study by Norviewu-Mortty (2012) that explored the leadership practices of school principals in disadvantaged rural schools in Ghana that found that principals who focused on teaching and learning improved student achievement in the disadvantaged context in Ghana.

**The Significant of Core Leadership Practices**

Leithwood and Riehl's (2003) core leadership practices are considered as relevant because it emphasises the core leadership practices and functions required of a school principal to improve schools in disadvantaged rural areas. Also, the components of the core practices of setting direction and developing people could help school principals to promote school success. Jacobson (2011) argued that principals in high-poverty areas demonstrate core leadership practices by creating an enabling

environment, involving parents in school management and encouraging collaboration among stakeholders. These dimensions have been shown to assist school principals to sustain academic standard and student achievement (Garza et al., 2014). In the process of setting direction, principals monitor the implementation of schools' vision, which may influence teachers' practice and thus impact student achievement (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). The core practices support principals' effort in using different approaches to set direction, develop people, and redesign the school in disadvantaged areas. Most importantly, the core practices underscore and consider for challenging and disadvantaged contexts, and maintained that it works in all contexts.

# Chapter Eight

## School Improvement

This chapter considers the concept of school improvement by examining how it relates to school effectiveness, its definitions, and basic principles. It looks at the approaches to school improvement, both organic and mechanistic. Since one of the key elements for positive change is the school culture, the review examines school culture and processes of change. In considering the change process, the chapter considers models of change, both

top-down and bottom-up approaches. Aware that educational change rests on focusing on the 'internal condition' of the school (Harris et al., 2003); the review evaluates teaching and learning process as one of the 'internal conditions.' Also, it considers capacity building because successful school improvement depends on the ability to build capacity for managing change. It links leadership to school improvement as one of the key elements for a successful school improvement process. Finally, it considers different criticisms leveled against school improvement projects by different researchers, and draws key lessons from school improvement research by way of conclusion.

**Concept of School Improvement**

In this century, the need for school improvement has been emphasised across many countries. This is informed by the belief that schools can make a difference in the learning outcome of the students. Hence, Mortimore (1991) defines an effective school as "one in which pupils' progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake"( p. 9). There is a difference between school effectiveness and school improvement (Chapman, 2005). School effectiveness is generally concerned with outcomes such as examination results, staying-on rates or pupil attitude, while school improvement is generally concerned with the introduction of change in schools (Coleman, 1994). More clearly, Reynolds et al. (1996) summarize the differences in the two traditions thus, in Table 8.1.



Table 8.1: *The differences between school effectiveness and school improvement*

| | ***School Effectiveness*** | ***School Improvement*** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Focus on schools | Focus on teachers |
| 2 | Focus on organization | Focus on school processes |
| 3 | Data-driven, with the emphasis on outcomes | Empirical evaluation of effects of changes |
| 4 | Quantitative in orientation | Qualitative in Orientation |
| 5 | Lack of knowledge about how to implement change strategies | Exclusively concerned with change in schools |
| 6 | More concerned with change in student outcomes | More concerned with journey of school improvement than its destination |
| 7 | More concerned with schools at one point in time | More concerned with schools as changing |
| 8 | Based on research knowledge | Focused on practitioner knowledge |

(Adapted from Chapman, 2005, p. 9; Bush & Coleman, 2000, p. 53)

Overall, both traditions aim to find ways of improving schools and schooling, which would have a positive impact on students. The difference between them is really the means that each takes in achieving this end. On the one hand, school effectiveness focuses on the outcomes of schooling by examining whether differentiation in the resources, organisational compositions and school

processes affect student outcomes and if so, how? On the other hand, school improvement focuses on establishing principles of improving student outcomes by developing organisational culture and building capacity within schools to change and improve (Harris, 2002; Fullan, 1991; Northouse, 2013). By implication, school effectiveness research takes the outcomes of schooling as limited and measurable while school improvement researchers include both the schooling process and outcomes (Harris & Bennett, 2001).

However, many researchers in the two fields argue that the whole idea of separating these two traditions is out-dated; rather, researchers within the two traditions should work together to improve the schools and impact on student outcomes, since they both need each other (Reynolds et al., 1993; Northouse, 2013; Chapman, 2005; Bush & Coleman, 2000). In this direction, school effectiveness and school improvement fields are now moving closer to a 'mixed traditions' approach within the field (Chapman, 2005).

School improvement has been defined in the International School Improvement Project (ISIP) as:

> *a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively (*Van Velzen et al., cited in Hopkins & Lagerweij, 1996; Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 42).



In 1985, the fourteen countries involved in an international school improvement project agreed on this definition. In analysing this definition, one will recognise three dimensions that are essential in any school improvement approach:

(a) The approach should be a systematic effort
(b) It should aim to change the learning conditions and other related internal conditions at the school
(c) The ultimate aim of the approach should be to accomplish the school's educational goals.

This definition shows that there may be preparatory changes needed before the ultimate aim of improving the educational goal is attained. The implication of this definition is that school improvement must be carefully planned, managed, and implemented, even though there may be periods of inevitable turbulence until changes are embedded or built into the structure. It also highlights the intricate relationship between school improvement and change (Stoll & Mortimore, 1997). The definition indicates that there are school processes and conditions which directly contribute to school improvement, and others that do so indirectly. Frequently, the current usage of the word 'improvement' appears to concentrate only on direct contributions (Fidler, 2002). Mortimore (1998) describes school improvement as "the process of improving" the way a school organises, promotes and supports learning... it includes changing aims, expectations, organisations (sometimes people), ways of learning, methods of teaching and organisational culture" (Hopkins, 2001, p. 12). This indicates that improvement process is vital for any school. In this process, an improving

school is one that ensures year-on-year improvement in the outcomes of successive cohorts of similar pupils (Gray et al., 1999; Northouse, 2013). It suggests that an improving school is one that increases its effectiveness and results over time. By implication, improvement is seen in terms of student outcomes.

According to Hopkins (2001), there are two senses in which the phrase 'school improvement' can be understood and used: 'common sense and specific sense.' In the common-sense usage, it means the general effort to make schools better places for pupils and students to learn in. Considering this specific sense, Hopkins (2001) defines school improvement as "a distinct approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change" (p. 13). This definition suggests the importance of school improvement as a process of changing school culture. It further sees schools as the centre of change, and teachers as an intrinsic part of the change process.

Furthermore, school improvement is seen as a series of concurrent, recurring processes in which a school:

- Enhances student outcomes;
- Focuses on teaching and learning;
- Builds the capacity to take charge of change regardless of its source;
- Defines its own direction;
- Assesses its current culture and works to develop positive cultural norms;
- Has strategies to achieve its goals;



- Addresses the internal conditions that enhance change;
- Maintains momentum during periods of turbulence;
- Monitors and evaluates its process, progress, achievement and development (Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 43).

The above-mentioned research suggests that school improvement is a process of enhancing the way the school organises, promotes and supports learning (Robertson et al., 2001; Barth, 1990). This is achieved by changing the aims, expectations, organisation, and ways of learning methods of teaching and institutional culture of schools. In some circumstances, it could also mean changing the school head or some of the teachers but it should not involve the large-scale replacement of students (Mortimore, 2000).

These definitions reveal the underpinning element in school improvement – changing the school culture. Within this, researchers in the field of school improvement are more concerned with the cultural dimensions of schooling (Hopkins, 2001). Hence, as Bath (1990) notes, "What need to be improved about schools is their culture, the quality of inter-personal relationships, and the nature and quality of learning experiences" (p. 45). What lies behind this idea is the belief that school culture can be changed through changing the internal conditions of the school.

**Basic Principles in School Improvement Process**

School self-improvement or renewal of schools is based on some assumptions:

1. The belief that schools have the capacity to improve themselves.
2. That school improvement involves cultural change.
3. That this change is best achieved by working on the internal conditions within each individual school.
4. School improvement is mainly concerned with building the organisational capacity for change and growth (Harris & Lambert, 2003; Barth, 1990).

In this regard, Barth (1990) asserts that improving school from within requires basing such reforms on the skills, aspirations and energy of those within the school like teachers, school management, school governors, and parents. This process builds a 'community of learner' approach by involving the stakeholders in the process of promoting school improvement.

School improvement is a slow process, because it is about maturation. With this understanding in mind, Hargreaves (1999) uses

> *the horticultural metaphor of sowing, germinating, thinning, shaping and pruning, showing and exchanging, to describe the process of improvement. We may add: grafting- the process by which an organism allows an external source to take root and flourish, and forever change its organic nature (*Cited in MacBeath & Mortimore, 2001, p. 17; 2003).



As mentioned above, there may not be any immediate improvement since the process is slow. This means that time must be given to the different processes of change to ensure improvement.

In ensuring improvement, schools should focus on student learning, academic achievement, and instructional strategies. This means the focus should be on student outcomes in schools. Hence, schools that have been found to be successful often place emphasis upon specific learning outcomes, rather than general learning goals (Harris, 2001). Therefore, in the school improvement process, emphasis must be upon well-defined student learning outcomes. In this light, research carried out in New York by Connell (1996) found that a common denominator of success in schools was a focus on students' academic achievement and the development of new instructional strategies. In the same way, a study carried out by Teddlies and Stringfield (1993) showed that ineffective schools focus less on core instructional policies than did the effective schools.

To achieve sustainable improvement, schools must be culturally responsive in pedagogy and human interactions (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Nieto, 1999); commit to social justice and ethical decision making as foundational principles (Marshall & Oliva, 2006); use data to understand and improve both processes and outcomes in the building of the organisation (Marzano, 2005); provide

appropriate curricular programming that maximizes student learning (Newmann et al., 2001); use effective content-specific pedagogic approaches (Hiebert & Stigler, 2000); and provide access to high-quality learning experiences for all populations.These are critical elements that leaders must know and employ in promoting school improvement. School improvement must be a principled approach to educational change, not merely 'target setting,' 'high stake accountability' reform strategies, and short-term quick fix approaches (Hopkins, 2001). Consequently, Hopkins proposed what he calls authentic school improvement programmes thus:

- **Achievement focused-** the focus on enhancing student learning and achievement, in a broader sense than mere examination results or test scores.
- **Empowering in aspiration-** they intend to provide those involved in the change process with the skills of learning and 'change agentry' that will raise levels of expectation and confidence throughout the educational community.
- **Research based and theory rich**- they base their strategies on programs and program elements with effective research findings that contribute to the bodies of knowledge and disciplines.
- **Context specific-** they pay attention to the exclusive features of the school situation and build strategies on the basis of an analysis of that particular context.
- **Capacity building in nature**- they aim to build the organisational conditions that support continuous improvement.



- **Enquiry driven-** they appreciate that reflection-in-action is an integral and self-sustaining process.
- **Implementation oriented**- they take a direct focus on the quality of classroom practice and student learning.
- **Interventionist and strategic**- they are purposely designed to improve the current situation in the school or system and take a medium-term view of the management of change, and plan and priorities developments accordingly.
- **Externally supported**- they build agencies around the schools that provide focused support, and create and facilitate networks that disseminate and sustain 'good practice.'
- **Systemic-** they accept the reality of a centralised policy context, but also realize the need to adapt external change for internal purpose and, to exploit the creativity and synergies existing within the system (adapted from Hopkins, 2001, pp. 16-17).

Leadership is a key to any successful school improvement project. Hence, Mortimore (1991) asserts that "factors such as sensitive headship, the careful management of students and teachers, the care of students, the quality of the environment and the positive climate of the school have been identified as being important in school improvement" (p. 48). In this assertion, Mortimore brings out the importance and role of leadership in the whole process of school improvement. The principals as the key leaders in Nigerian secondary schools hold the key to

school improvement (Bush, 2008; Olagboye, 2004). Therefore, if the schools are to improve, the principals must be effective.

A specific feature of the improvement process is the school development plan. Every improvement project should have a development plan, which attempts to codify much of what are keys to school improvement process, thus:

- It institutionalises a regular planning and review sequence.
- It sets targets and costs them in terms of resources.
- It is ideally based on the assessment of information from previous reviews.
- It should reach every level of the organisation so that it has an effect on teaching and learning.
- Its construction and review are collectively undertaken (adapted from Harris et al., 1991, p. 16; Harris, 2002).

The importance of vision to school improvement has been stressed (Valdez Perez et al., 1999). Research has shown that school improvement requires schools to build their vision of where schools could be. Vision helps schools to define their direction, and to develop an attitude that says 'we're in charge of change (Stoll & Fink, 1996). The vision of the school or the school in-the-future should be one to which all members of the school community have an opportunity to contribute (Ainscow et al., 2000). A mental picture or vision can serve to guide schools to coherent change (Northouse, 2013; Valdez Perez et al., 1999). When there is a common vision, there



is bound to be a success in the process of change (Harris, 2002). Hence, Valdez Perez et al. (1999) maintain that "a co-created vision can provide an 'internal compass' for those involved in making a change and assist them in relating individual contributions to the overall goals of reform"(p. 6). The vision needs to be shared by all in the school community. In this process, the teachers and management work together and take decisions together for the good of the school. Put differently, there should be active and participatory leadership, rather than a top-down delegation (Harris, 2002).

The literature on successful school improvement reveals that there are key levers in the whole process: building relationships, assessing teachers and school capacity for leadership, developing a culture of enquiry, organising the school for leadership work, generate purposeful collaboration, implementing one's plans for building leadership capacity, and building a professional learning community (Harris & Lambert, 2003).

Finally, a school improvement strategy constitutes the deliberate actions or sequence of actions taken by school staff in order to implement identified curriculum or organisational priorities. How powerful this strategy is depends on the strength of the factors that might militate against it (Hopkins, 2001). In this process, there is a need for a change facilitator that will diagnose attitudes to change and the skills needed to implement the change and respond accordingly. To transform an organization is to alter its fundamental character or identity (culture) (Deal, 1990).

**Organic and Mechanistic Approaches to School Improvement**

This section now examines the two main approaches to school improvement project. Hopkins et al. (1994) categorise school improvement projects into two broad approaches: organic and mechanistic. School improvement that is organic suggests broad principles or general strategies within which schools are likely to flourish (Harris, 2000). This organic approach to school improvement shows the importance of taking a multi-level perspective on school development and change (Harris & Bennett, 2001). A good example of organic approach is the 'Improving the Quality of Education for All' (IQEA) which focuses on building collaborative cultures in schools. This is the most successful school improvement project in the UK (Harris, 2001). It was based on the fact that 'without an equal focus on development capacity, or internal conditions of the school, innovative work quickly becomes marginalized (Hopkins & Harris, 1997; Northouse, 2013). In this approach, schools need to work on the general school level change and classroom level to sustain improvement.

On the other hand, school improvement that is mechanistic provides direct guidelines and is highly specific in the strategies it prescribes. This self-managing approach to school improvement that was adopted in the mid-1980s has six phases: goal setting, policy making, planning, preparation, implementation, and evaluation. This has not been very successful in all schools. An example of this approach is the 'Bob Slavin's Success for All projects' (Slavin et al., 1996; Harris, 2000).



**School Culture**

One of the key elements for positive change is the school culture (Hopkins, 1991); thus, this review examines school culture in a bid to establish the place of culture in the process of school improvement. The two elements that can either inhibit or promote success and positive change are the school culture and leadership. For school improvement to be successful, the issue of culture should not be neglected (Creemers & Reezigt, 2005). Culture is simply defined as 'the way we do things around here' (MacGilrist et al., 1995, p. 36; Brundrett, 1999, p. 38). Alexander (1992) distinguishes between ideology and culture. For him, ideology is a collection of ideas, values, and beliefs which explain and legitimize the activities and situation of particular social groups while culture encompasses both ideology and the social and material structures in which it is embedded, with their attendant behaviour patterns and networks of relationships (Dean, 1999). Again, culture is seen as the routines, values, norms, procedures, and expectations of the institution (Brundrett, 1999). Since these definitions ignore the crucial relationship between culture and structure, they do not seem to capture the concept of culture. Consequently, Schein (1986) argues that the term 'culture'

> *should be reserved for the deeper level of basic* ***assumptions*** *and* ***beliefs*** *that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic 'taken-for-granted' fashion an organisation's view of itself and environment (*cited in Brundrett, 1999, p. 39).

Creating sustainable school improvement means understanding the culture of the school and deciding on strategies for change and development that are suitable for that context (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Culture defines reality for those within a social organisation; it gives them support and identity and norms, as well as a framework for occupational learning (Hargreaves, 1994). The culture of an organisation is expressed through the ways in which those who belong to the organisation feel, think and act. It focuses on the values, beliefs, and norms of individuals in the organisation and how these individual perceptions coalesce into shared meanings. Hence, the literature indicates that the beliefs and values of a group lie at the heart of its culture (MacGilchrist et al., 1995). It is manifested by symbols and rituals rather than through the formal structure of the organisation (Bush & Middlewood, 2005). School culture is shaped by its history, context, and the people in it. It is influenced by a school's external context and the students in the school, and their socio-economic background (Stoll, 2003). It further describes how things are, and acts as a screen or lens through which the world is viewed (Stoll, 1999). Culture varies from school to school. Some researchers like McLaughlin et al. (1990) and Huberman, (1992) see school culture as an agglomeration of several subcultures: cultures of those of teachers, pupils, administrators, non-teaching staff and parents (Stoll & Fink, 1996).

In a study of staff relationships in primary schools, carried out by Nias and colleagues, four features of a school culture were observed:



1. Beliefs and values
2. Understandings, attitudes, meanings, and norms.
3. Symbols, rituals, and ceremonies.
4. Preferred behaviours, styles, and stances (Whitaker, 1993).

These agree with the assertion of Bush and Middlewood, (2005) that the central features of organisational culture are the values and beliefs of members, shared norms and meanings, rituals and ceremonies. The three dimensions: professional relationships, organisational arrangements, and opportunities for learning are practical manifestations of the underlying beliefs and values of a school community. They are not only the expression of the present culture, but they help to shape and change the future culture of the school.

In building school culture, every school should have a developmental plan which helps to carry the school community along in achieving school improvement. Hence, Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991) assert that development planning transforms the culture of the school by:

- Promoting a shared vision for the school;
- Creating a management arrangement that empowers;
- Providing for every teacher a role in the management of the school and opportunities for leadership;
- Encouraging everyone involved to have a stake in the school's continuing improvement;

- Generating commitment and confidence which springs from success.

Furthermore, Bolman and Deal (1991) see culture as both product and process:

> *As product, it embodies the accumulated wisdom of those who were members before we came. As process, it is continually renewed and re-created as new members are taught the old ways and eventually become teachers themselves (p. 250).*

Culture changes over time. In a research carried out by Rossman and colleagues (cited Stoll and Fink, 1996), three cultural change processes are identified:

- *Evolutionary change*- this form of change is implicit, unconscious and unplanned. With time, norms, certain beliefs, and values are introduced as others give way.
- *Additive change*- this may not be explicit, as norms, beliefs, and values suddenly become modified when new ideas or initiatives are introduced.
- *Transformative change*- this is explicit and conscious, with deliberate attention to changing norms, values, and beliefs.

In this process of culture change, the challenge of continuous improvement is to marry culture and structure. Structures without an underpinning culture of improvement are doomed to be ineffective. Meanwhile, strong cultures without sustaining structures will not survive from one generation to the next (MacBeath &



Mortimore, 2001). A longitudinal study of 'Improving School Effectiveness' - the notion of school culture among some primary and secondary schools by both the University of London and the University of Strathclyde, reveals that culture plays a role in creating academically effective schools, whilst playing a role in the management of change in schools (Prosser, 1999).

In considering school culture, the teachers' world views cannot be over emphasized. Hence, Fullan (1991) asserts that educational change depends on what teachers do and think. What they do is influenced by their beliefs, values, and assumptions, which also shape norms. It is beneficial to note that norms, beliefs, and values influence teachers' perception and definition of effectiveness. This means that culture defines effectiveness (Northouse, 2013; Stoll & Fink, 1996). In the same vein, the school principal is a cultural leader, who creates, manages culture and works with culture (Whitaker, 1993; Prosser, 1999). Also, the leadership of the principal in shaping culture is highly significant in the domain of school improvement. This requires effective and stable leadership. Hence, Arikewuyo (2009) argues that it is difficult for Nigerian principals to shape school culture, because of their ineffectiveness and their frequent transfers, which creates unstable leadership. In this light, research carried out by Kruger et al. (2007) indicates that principals have impact on the culture of the school though a weak effect. Leaders have the responsibility to sustain culture, and culture maintenance is often regarded as a central feature of effective leadership (Bush & Middlewood, 2005). This cultural force of leadership binds together students, teachers, and others as

believers in the work of the school. Understanding the school culture is, therefore, an essential prerequisite for any internal or external change agent (Stoll, 1999). Hence, the literature indicates that leadership needs to be connected with organisational culture (Hult & Homan, 2005). Each organisation has different values and beliefs, and these become integral to the organisation's identity. If a leader is to be successful within a particular organisation he/she must learn the culture of the organisation and impact on it (MacBeath & Mortimore, 2001).

Building a positive climate in school culture requires building trust within the learning community. As people work together, there is a need to trust each other. It is the social glue that links a learning community and allows teachers to work collaboratively (Harris, 2002). This means that school teachers need to trust their colleagues and school management; otherwise cultural change is unlikely to occur. Research indicates that trust is particularly important when the risks are high or when large-scale change is imminent (Harris, 2002). This agrees with the view of Mitchell and Sackney (2000) that "trust is a key factor in bringing about profound improvement in school. Without trust…. a culture of self-preservation and isolation is likely to pervade the school" (p. 49). The implication of these assertions is that trust is a key element for ensuring school improvement. This agrees with the findings by Harris (2002) that ineffective schools have particular cultures that are characterised by dysfunctional staff relationships and insufficient focus on teaching and learning. Therefore, effort must be made to develop a collaborative culture and to build trust among staff in schools so as to ensure school improvement and growth.



Hargreaves (1994) has suggested four 'ideal types' of school culture thus:

- *The formal school culture* – characterised by pressure on students to achieve learning goals but weak social cohesion between staff and students.
- *A welfarist culture* - where relations between staff and students are relaxed and friendly, but there is little academic pressure.
- *A hothouse culture* - which pressurises staff and students to participate in all aspects of school life, whether academic or social.
- *A survivalist culture* – characterised by poor social relations and low academic achievement.

For improvement to take place, there is a need for re-culturing. This means, the process of developing new values, beliefs, and norms. To pave the way for improvement, every school in Nigeria needs new values for students and teachers (Olagboye, 2004). This agrees with Fullan (1996) that there is a need to build new conceptions about instruction and a new form of professionalism for teachers. In this light, Morgan (1997) asserts that re-culturing is

> *A challenge of transforming mind-sets, visions, paradigms, images, metaphors, beliefs, and shared meanings that sustain existing… It is about inventing what amounts to a new way of life (p. 143)*

Finally, school improvement cannot come from anywhere other than within schools themselves, and 'within' is a

complex web of power relationships, norms, values, beliefs, social and emotions. It requires effective stable leadership and the nurturing of the garden within which new ideas can bloom- the culture.

**Process of Change**

In considering the process of change in the wheel of school improvement, this book investigates the concept of change by looking at the stages of change process, basic assumptions, factor for successful implementation of change and the different approaches: both top-down and bottom-up approaches.

> *Change can be regarded as a dynamic and continuous process of development and growth that involves reorganization in response to 'felt needs.' It is a process of transformation, a flow from one state to another, either initiated by internal factors or external forces involving individuals, groups, or institutions, leading to a realignment of existing values, practices and outcomes* (Morrison, 1998, p. 13).

As this definition indicates, there are change processes that can inform the improvement process. Change is a process, not a single event (Fidler, 2002). It is important to understand change process. Hence, Fullan (2001) notes, "moral purpose without an understanding of the change process is moral martyrdom"(p. 5). Change is complex. This agrees with the view of Fullan, (1991) that 'educational change is technically simple and socially complex.'There are three stages to the change process:



1. *Initiation*- this is about deciding to embark on innovation and developing commitment towards the process.
2. *Implementation* – this involves carrying out action plans, sustaining the commitment to the process, checking progress and overcoming possible problems.
3. *Institutionalisation or making the change permanent*- during this stage, innovation and change stop being regarded as something new and become part of the school's usual way of doing things (Hopkins & Lagerweij, 1996; Myers, 1996; Hopkins, 2001: 2002; Morrison, 1998; Reynolds et al., 1996; Stoll & Fink, 1996).

Some researchers have added a fourth one called *Outcome* (Fullan, 1991). This refers to variety of results, including impact on students, teachers, the organisation and school-community relations. These three stages of the change process underpin the assumptions made by International School Improvement Project (ISIP). According to ISIP (cited in Hopkins, 2001), school improvement approach to educational change rests on these assumptions:

- *The school is the centre of change*- This means that any external reform or change must bear in mind that all schools are not the same. The situation of a particular school must be considered.
- *A systematic approach to change*- school improvement requires a carefully planned and managed process that takes place over a period of time.

- *The internal conditions of schools must be the key focus* – all activities and resources supporting teaching and learning must be considered.
- *Focusing on educational goal effectively* – effort must be made to focus on the student outcome and general developmental needs of the students and the school community.
- *A multi-level perspective* – though the school is the centre of change, it needs to work collaboratively with all stakeholders, with their roles defined, harnessed and committed to the process of school improvement.
- *Integrative implementation strategies*- there should be a link between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches in the whole process. The 'top-down' provides a framework, resources, and a menu of alternatives, while 'bottom-up' ensures school based implementation.
- *The drive towards institutionalisation* – Change must become part of the way of life of the teachers and students in a given school (Adapted from Harris & Bennett, 2001, pp. 33-34).

In the same way, David (1982) describes four assumptions upon which strategies for change are based:

> *One assumption is that change does not occur unless the particulars of a school and its context are taken into account.*
>
> *A second is that school staff will not be committed to a change effort unless they have had the opportunity to be involved in decisions concerning the shape of this project.*
> *A third is that effective schools are characterized by a school-wide focus- (a set of shared goals and a unified approach to instruction) as opposed to several separate, uncoordinated projects and approaches.*
>
> *Finally, proponents of school-based strategies believe that any planning effort that encourages self-awareness and reflection on the part of school staff will greatly increase the chances that behaviours will change (*adapted from Hopkins, 1984, p. 17).



Considering the above assumptions, Harris (2002) agrees that there is a need to involve teachers in decision and planning regarding any change to be introduced into the school, so as to ensure its success. Change needs to be built on community, not on the individual in the community. This agrees with the view of Fink (1999) that "change has to be built into the processes. Change identified with a person has the roots of its own destruction" (p.277).

Research on school improvement focuses on the process of school level change and the improvement strategies needed to achieve such change. They stress the development process measure more strongly than the

achievement outcome. What is obvious is that they are more concerned with "how schools change and become more effective" (Harris & Bennett, 2001). If school effectiveness research represents the '*what*' of change, school improvement is the *'how'* of change (Stoll & Fink, 1996). However, it is argued that not all change is improvement but all improvement leads to change (Fullan, 1991). Therefore, change must not be equated with improvement (Harris et al., 1996). The implication of this is that change for the better is complex and problematic most of the time. There is no blue print or short cut to change, change seldom follows a logical, rationally planned sequence of events.

It seems that schools have to learn to live with a period of turmoil, uncertainty and dis-equilibrium; without this, a long-lasting change will not occur (Brundrett, 1999). Schools need to know their internal conditions in relation to their route of change before they begin developmental work. This implies that there is no common recipe for all schools in the process of improvement. Therefore, the particular context, history, prevailing circumstances and developmental need of the given school must be considered before change can be introduced (Harris, 2002). Change is concerned more with people than with content. Indeed, "change changes people but people change change!" (Morrison, 1998, p. 15).

Furthermore, research findings across many countries have highlighted some key factors for successful school change thus:



1. Leadership – research has shown the importance of leadership in securing school-level change. It indicates that in a bid to improve schools, school leaders need to have vision and ability to manage change. Such leadership needs to be shared and collaborative (Harris, 2002). It is in line with this finding that this study seeks school improvement through ensuring effective leadership in Nigeria secondary schools.
2. Teacher development – school improvement requires teacher development. The teachers need to be empowered through training to ensure successful change process.
3. There is no one blueprint for action – those who promote school improvement need to know that there is no one size fits all. Approaches vary from school to school. The 'one size fits all approach' to school improvement seems to fundamentally misunderstand the process of school and classroom-level change (Stoll & Myers, 1998). Hence, effort must be made to match improvement strategy to school type (Morrison, 1998). In this regard, Hopkins, (2001) maintains:

> *Schools at different stages of development require different strategies not only to enhance their capacity for development, but also to provide a more effective education for their students. Strategies for school development need to fit the 'growth state' or culture of the particular school. Strategies which are effective for improving*

> *performance at one growth are not necessarily effective at another (*p. 3).

This suggests that schools need to consider their peculiar situation and many other factors before introducing change into the school organisation.

4. Focusing on teaching and learning – It is important to focus attention on student level and improve on the teaching and learning process in classrooms.
5. School culture – The need to understand the culture of the school. Research has shown that school culture that promotes collegiality, trust and collaborative working relationships are more self-renewing and responsive to improvement (Harris, 2002).

With this understanding in mind, to introduce change into schools in Nigeria, the schools need to know the key issues about change process in school improvement (MacGilchrist et al., 2004; Brundrett, 1999). Therefore, they need to bear these factors in mind:

- Change takes time;
- A school's capacity for change will vary;
- Change is complex;
- Change needs to be well led and managed;
- Teachers need to be the main agents of change;
- The pupils need to be the main focus for change (MacGilchrist et al., 2004; Brundrett, 1999).

This indicates that schools in Nigeria need to establish the need for change, involve all those concerned, monitor,



and support and reinforce the change process so as to ensure success (Morrison, 1998). The internal factors which need to be taken into consideration in the process of school improvement are: the type of leadership; school organisation; prevailing attitudes, commitment of staff, collective responsibility and the need for a united effort to improve (MacGilchrist et al., 1995; Northouse, 2013).

Still on how to implement change effectively, Morrison (1998) comments that change is likely to be successful if it is congruent with existing practices in the school; understood and communicated effectively; triallable and trialled; seen to be an improvement on existing practice by the participants, seen to further the direction in which the institution is moving. However, if change is over-complex, not understood, poorly communicated, over-demanding, unclear, untested, too incompatible with existing practices, values and beliefs, it will fail. In this direction, Kanter and her associates present 'Ten Commandments' for successful implementation of change:

1. The need for analysis of the organisation and the identification of the need for change;
2. The creation of a genuinely shared vision that provides direction;
3. The need to separate past activities from current and future activities, to break with the past;
4. The need to create a sense of urgency for change;
5. The need for a strong and supportive leader of change and senior management;
6. The need to attract, develop and employ political sponsorship;

7. The careful development of the plan for implementation;
8. The creation of structures in the organisation that will support the change;
9. The need for widespread communication, honesty with people and the building up of their involvement;
10. The need to reinforce the change in order that it will become sustained and institutionalized (adapted from Morrison, 1998, pp. 41-42).

Thus, the main features of the landscape of change process have been articulated. The school is widely regarded as the prime unit of change, the basic assumptions are well spelled out, and its successful implementation processes are outlined. Effective leadership and the type of leadership adopted are essential ingredients for successful change that can lead to school improvement (MacGilchrist et al., 1995; Harris, 2002).

**Top-down School Improvement**

In education, adoptive and adaptive models of change fit the positivist and interpretative paradigms (Hopkins, 2001). On the one hand, the adoptive approach to change is a top-down approach to change. It assumes that change is linear, initiated by the head and motivated by external pressure. Thus, it does not consider variables within the individual school environment. This top-down model was developed to help in the implementation of centralized curriculum innovations in the mid-1960, and refers to an approach which is essentially externally driven. That is, initiated by policy-makers and not within



the school. It is a concentration on system-level reform and change, leading to a view of school improvement that is 'top-down,' and concerned with outcomes rather than processes. It focuses more on school curriculum and formal organizational factors and is highly centralized (Fullan, 1991). Top-down school improvement is about policy formulation and provides general aims for an overall strategy and operational plans (Northouse, 2013; Hopkins & Lagerweij, 1996).

Nigeria operates a centralized system of education, in which the government makes all policies for the schools and schools are left to implement (Nwagwu et al., 2004). This system encourages a top-down approach. This centralized approach is influenced by increased government control over policy and direction. According to Hopkins (2001), what is inherent in the top-down approach is the assumption that change is linear, and should be initiated by an authority figure. A top-down approach is "a centralised reform, whereby some external (usually government) agent and agency initiate the change, creates policy and leaves it up to the schools to implement the changes" (Hopkins, 2001). There are some characteristics that are associated with the top-down approach: standardisation, curriculum development, teacher training and performance based approaches to school improvement. Standardisation means that the same curriculum, materials, instructional designs and assessment are used across various types of school. In summary, a top-down approach is an approach where schools are mandated to adopt a policy for the purposes of promoting excellence and efficiency, but the locus of

control is on the external agent, who is usually the government itself (Fullan, 1991). Nonetheless, a lack of teacher commitment to government-initiated 'top-down' reforms - led to a new improvement paradigm in the 1980s, called 'bottom-up' approach (Stoll & Fink, 1996).

**Bottom-up School Improvement**

School improvement projects are intended to be a 'bottom-up' approach to educational development, designed to involve the teachers and students (Harris, 2002; Hopkins, 2001). The underpinning idea of this type of school improvement project is to improve student success by altering and improving the learning conditions within schools (Harris, 2002; Fullan, 1991). It is for this reason that the bottom-up approach to school improvement makes the school into the center of change and teaching and learning as the focus of change (Hopkins, 2001). Nigerian schools should lead school improvement projects by taking the initiatives and responsibilities (Olagboye, 2004). This suggests that schools should take ownership of school improvement initiatives, though they may still need the help of external agents like experts and policy makers (Elmore, 2004; Harris, 2002). This has the advantage of being situational, in that activities are tailored to the particular needs of a school (Harris & Bennett, 2001). Moreover, this approach encourages empowering the individuals within the school to initiate, manage and sustain change and improvement (Harris & Chrispeels, 2006). The main characteristics of the bottom-up approach are decentralisation, restructuring, and site-based



management. This means that power is given to the school to manage their budget, recruitment, and resources. It is often controlled by the board of governors, made up of representatives of all stakeholders.

**A Combination of Top-down and Bottom-up Approaches**

Whether centralised or decentralised, top-down or bottom-up approaches will not in themselves ensure school improvement (Fullan, 1991). Since educational change involves changing people and cultures more than structures, top-down approaches tend not to work (Harris, 2002; Stoll & Fink, 1996; Fullan, 1991), though research has shown that a bottom-up approach has a greater chance of ensuring school improvement (Hopkins, 2001; Fullan, 1999). However, Hopkins (2001) argues that none of the approaches is a satisfactory basis for authentic school improvement. For him, authentic school improvement entails enhancing student achievement through the use of specific instructional strategies that have a direct impact on the organisation and culture of the school (Hopkins, 2001). Consequently, many writers argue that neither purely top-down nor purely bottom-up approaches to school improvement work; rather they suggest that a combination of the two approaches might be more effective (Hopkins, 2001; Fullan, 1999). Effective change integrates top-down strategies with bottom-up strategies. This agrees with the view of Stoll and Fink (1996) that the combination of top-down and bottom-up change works effectively. However, since such dualism can create tensions, Harris and Chrispeels (2006) maintain that a mixed approach

does not guarantee improvement either. Success is not so much about combining the two approaches, but ensuring that the core factors for successful school improvement are in place, such as building capacity within schools through improving the organisational conditions; focusing on classroom instruction; building capacity among members within the schools, especially leadership capacity and developing context-specific school improvement (Harris & Chrispeels, 2006; Harris & Lambert, 2003; Harris, 2002).

**Capacity Building**

Successful school improvement is dependent upon the ability of individual schools to build capacity for managing change (Harris & Muijs, 2005; Northouse, 2013). Considering Hopkins (2001) definition of school improvement as a distinct approach to educational change that has the purpose of enhancing student outcomes and strengthening the school's capacity for managing change, the capacity building becomes vital in implementing change in schools. School capacity may be defined as the collective competency of the school to bring about effective change (Harris & Muijs, 2005). Research findings by Newman et al. (2000) suggest four core components of capacity, thus:

- Knowledge, skills, and disposition of individual staff members;
- A professional learning community, in which staff work collaboratively to set clear goals for student learning, assess how well students are doing, develop action plans to increase student achievement, while being engaged in enquiry and problem-solving.
- Programme coherence – the extent to which the school's programmes for student and staff learning are co-ordinated, focused on clear learning goals and sustained over a period of time.
- Technical resources – high-quality curriculum, instructional material, assessment instruments, technology, workspace and physical environment (adapted from Harris et al., 2003, p. 88).



A vital indicator of a school's capacity for improvement is its increased learning ability, because as we move towards the learning organisation, the culture of the school becomes the knowledge carrier, spanning generations of staff (Fullan, 2000). In this light, the National College for School Leadership in England has created a framework which contains five elements that provide a better understanding of capacity as foundation conditions, the personal, the interpersonal, the organisational, and external opportunities (Harris et al., 2003). Building capacity for the whole school improvement "involves bringing together the four core components: resources, structures, culture and the skills of staff, not only focusing on improvement but doing so in ways which are synergistic" (Harris et al., 2003, p. 122). This capacity may be built by improving the performance of teachers, adding more resources, materials or technology and by restructuring how tasks are undertaken (Harris, 2002).

**Internal Capacity Building**

To ensure school improvement at the classroom level,

there is a need for capacity building within the school as an organisation. Internal capacity building has to do with creating the conditions, opportunities and experiences for development and mutual learning (Harris, 2001). It requires giving attention to how collaborative processes in schools are fostered and developed. In capacity building, staff development activities need to be put in place to provide on-going support for the new programme (Harris, 2002). Staff development needs to be school-based and classroom-focused. The purpose is to equip teachers to manage classroom change, development, and improvement. Schools need to invest in teachers' professional development (Ogunu, 2000). Moreover, there is evidence that successful school improvement projects require teachers to be provided with the opportunity to enquire into their practice. This often results in change of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of the teachers, and which often has a direct impact on their classroom teaching and improving the learning outcomes of students (Harris, 2002). In building capacity internally, the students must be empowered to participate actively in the change process. There is a need to listen to students, allowing them to take an active part in the process of enquiry and decision-making. Moreover, developing leadership capacity within the school promotes school improvement because most achievement at school level can be attributed to the values, vision and sense of purpose created and maintained by school leaders (Chapman, 2003).

**External Support in Capacity Building**

An external change agent is known to have great impact



in capacity building and change process (Harris, 2002; Chapman, 2003). The external agent is designed to provide support and to assist schools in diagnosing and identifying their strengths and weaknesses. This they do by providing materials needed for development, provision of counselling and the practical, technical and emotional support needed at critical stages of improvement. Moreover, they assist in staff development and providing evaluation feedback to such schools, so as to enable them to take stock of their progress and development (Harris, 2002).

**Teaching and Learning**

School improvement as an approach to educational change, according to ISIP, rests partly on the assumption that there is a need to focus on the 'internal conditions' of the school which includes the teaching and learning process (Harris et al., 2003). Teaching and learning lie at the heart of school improvement. Hence, school improvement is seen as raising student achievement by focusing on the teaching and learning process and the conditions which support it (Hopkins, 1994). It has become apparent that reorganising the process in a bid to improve school impacts upon student achievement and learning (Fullan, 1991). Though there are other conditions at this level which can impact on classroom improvement, the teaching and learning process remain the key determinant of educational outcome (Creemers, 1994; Northouse, 2013). In the school improvement bid in Nigeria therefore, effort should be made to mobilise change at school, department and classroom levels (Fullan, 1992). This agrees with the view of Hopkins, (2001) that

'real' improvement 'is best regarded as a strategy for educational change that focuses on student achievement by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangement within the school to support teaching and learning.' For effective teaching and learning to take place in secondary schools in Nigeria, there is a need for an authentic relationship with openness between teachers and students (Ajayi, 2002). They must ensure that rules and boundaries in the classrooms are defined, that teachers have access to the necessary materials for teaching and that there is a reflection on teaching by the individual teacher by reflecting on his or her own practice (Harris, 2002). This requires the effective leadership of the principals to ensure appropriate condition for teaching learning. Unfortunately, the literature indicates that most Nigerian principals do not visit classrooms to ensure proper teaching and learning process (Olagboye, 2004; Ajayi, 2002). Effort should thus be made to ensure that teachers prepare the lesson and make good use of classroom time (Nwagwu et al., 2004). Research has shown that maximisation of teaching time is a key to effective teaching and learning (Creemers, 1994). Effective teaching and learning involve creating a learning environment, which:

- Emphasises learning goals and makes them explicit;
- Outlines learning purposes and potential learning outcomes;
- Carefully organises and sequences curriculum experiences;
- Explains and illustrates what students are to learn;
- Frequently asks direct and specific questions to monitor students' progress with ample opportunity to practise, gives prompts and feedback to ensure success and corrects errors;
- Reviews regularly and holds students accountable for work (adapted from Harris & Hopkins, 2000; Harris, 2002, p. 94).



Both the literature and research findings see focusing on teaching and learning as a key to school improvement by enhancing student outcomes. Literature shows that most principals in Nigeria do not ensure proper teaching and learning which has consequently influenced the poor performance of students in external examinations (Ajayi, 2002). Consequently, this research seeks to examine some issues bothering on teaching and learning such as: Do principals in Nigeria focus on teaching and learning? Is there a link between principal leadership and improvement in teaching and learning? Do the principals consequently influence student outcomes? These are some of the questions that this research seeks to address.

**Measuring Improvement in Schools**

This section examines how to measure improvement in schools by considering both the literature and research findings on this issue. One way in which researchers have tried to measure stability and improvement is through examination performance (Gray et al., 1999). That is, measuring the impact of development or intervention in terms of student outcomes. Research carried out by ESRC (MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001) found that "schools' results tended to be relatively stable over time" (p. 16). Drawing on Hopkins' (2001) definition of school

improvement above, MacBeath and Mortimore (2001) posit a two-dimensional matrix: by definition, improving schools has high-outcome and high-capacity, while ineffective schools have low-outcome and low-capacity. Gray et al. (1999) assert that schools that have and use outcome data in a positive, active way to enhance the capacity of their schools as organizations are those most likely to be truly self-improved in the longer term. Critics of improvement research have argued that it is not sufficient to use a single outcome measure, in particular academic achievement, to determine the true level of effectiveness in any school (Harris & Bennett, 2001). The school improvement field has recognized the need to use multiple outcome measures to explore, capture and compare levels of effectiveness (Teddlie & Stringfield, 1993). In this regard, there is need to understand the relationship between school processes and school outcomes (Harris, 2001). The implication is that for effective measurement, the process and outcomes should be considered. This agrees with the view of Fidler (2002) that in measuring effectiveness, both the process and the outcome should be considered.

**Factors that May Hinder School Improvement**

To ensure effective school improvement process, it is helpful to note that there is always a time of turbulence and other internal or external factors that may hinder school improvement (Stoll & Fink, 1996). Therefore, this section investigates the literature on these possible factors. Firstly, Reynolds (1992), from a project that failed to turn school around, listed the possible factors that can hinder school improvement as including:



- Teachers projecting their own deficiencies on to children or their communities.
- Teachers clinging on to past practices.
- Defenses built up against threatening messages from outside.
- Fear of failure.
- Seeing change as someone else's job.
- Hostile relationships among staff
- Seeking safety in numbers (a ring-fenced mentality).

Again, considering what could prevent school improvement, Harris (2002) suggests the following:

a. *Unclear purposes and goals*: as long as the purpose of the change is not clearly communicated, the staff will not be committed to it.
b. *Competing priorities*: in organisation or school where there are too many changes at the same time, some changes will be given more priority than others.
c. *Lack of support*: if the necessary and adequate technical, professional and emotional supports for teachers are not given in the process of implementing change that change will not succeed.
d. *Insufficient attention to implementation*: school improvement is bound to fail if no sufficient thought and planning have been given to how the change will work within the schools or classrooms.

e. *Inadequate leadership*: since successful change or innovation requires direction or leadership, improvement will not come unless there is effective leadership in the process of change.

These observations made by Harris (2002), clearly bring out the relevance of effective leadership in the process of change and improvement in schools. As she notes, improvement will not come unless there is effective leadership. In all, the success and failure of any school improvement project depend on how it is internally led and managed (Stoll & Fink, 1996). Therefore, effort must be made to maintain momentum during periods of turbulence and to have the right strategies and leadership to promote school improvement.

**Leadership and School Improvement**

There is a strong link between leadership and school improvement, with outstanding leadership being a key characteristic of outstanding schools (Bush, 2008). This was echoed by the National College for School Leadership in England, '…effective leadership is a key to both continuous improvement and major system transformation' (Bush, 2008, p. 7). Schools being able to make the necessary changes that will bring about school improvement will depend largely on the nature and quality of their leaders (Sammons et al., 1995). In this sense, a study by Huber (2004) indicates that schools classified as successful possess a competent and sound school leadership. This is strongly supported by research carried out by Hallinger and Heck (1998) that though



there is difficulty establishing the effect of leadership on student outcomes, school leadership effects account for about 3 to 5 percent of the variation in student achievement. For leadership to impact on schools positively, it must be effective and the leaders must perform their roles effectively (Bush, 2008). Hence, Sammons et al. (1995) submit that firm and purposeful professional leadership is one of the key characteristics of effective schools. Therefore, this section examines the relationship between leadership and school improvement by critically evaluating the role and impact of leadership on school improvement.

The International School Improvement Programme (ISIP) working in fourteen countries has emphasised the importance of the school leader in school improvement (Coleman, 1994). Consequently, four major tasks for leaders in the process of school improvement are recommended thus:

1. Taking a long-term view.
2. Ensuring a 'corporate educational strategy' agreed to by all involved.
3. Working towards integration, they have to glue the results of successful improvement work on to the normal work of the school.
4. The management of external relations, relating the school or college to its wider environment (Coleman, 1994, pp. 68-69).

This shows that leadership is vital to the school improvement process. This agrees with Stoll and Fink (1996) who argue that leadership is one of the routes into

school improvement and the most fundamental continuing condition of school improvement. While stating the conditions for school improvement, Harris (2001) sees leadership as the most central, enabling factor for school improvement. This supports the view of West et al. (2000) that "Essentially, schools that have improved have leaders that made significant and measurable contributions to the development of the school and the effectiveness of their staff" (p. 36). The implication is that the quality of leadership matters in school success. A school without good leadership is like a body without a head; such a body is dead. With this understanding of the place of leadership in school improvement, studies have shown that successful school improvement involves building leadership capacity for change by creating high levels of involvement and leadership skilfulness (Harris & Lambert, 2003).

In discussing how leadership influences school improvement, Hallinger and Heck (1996) list four ways in which leadership influences school improvement:

(1) Establishing and conveying the *purposes* and *goals* of the school.
(2) Through the interplay between the *school's organisation* and *its social network*.
(3) Through Influence over people.
(4) In relation to organisational culture.

A leader who is able to go through these paths will certainly move the wheel of school improvement forward. Research has shown that where leadership is too authoritarian, or alternatively too laissez-faire,



development will not occur, and improvement will be difficult to achieve (Harris, 2002).

In research involving 300 schools, Berman and McLaughlin found that projects having the active support of the principals were most likely to fare well (Fullan, 1992). This confirms the findings of Hall and his colleagues, namely that "the degree of implementation of the innovation is different in different schools because of the actions and concern of the principals" (Fullan, 1992, p. 82). These findings imply that school leadership is a key to successful school improvement. The success of any change or innovation in schools may be influenced by the school leader and the particular leadership style adopted. This corroborates the finding from the research carried out by Teddlie et al. (1989) among eight schools in Louisiana; here, they identify differences in the role of the principal as a critical variable. It indicates that there is a strong link between leadership practise and successful school improvement (West et al., 2000). Therefore, whoever entertains the hope of improving any school must get the leadership right.

Finally, considering the influence of leadership, Harris, (2002) argues, "The evidence from the international literature demonstrates that effective leaders exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and on the achievement of students" (p. 69). It shows that the principal may not have direct influence on the student outcome and school improvement but may have influence through the activities of the teachers. It indicates that the quality of leadership is vital for school

improvement (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Within school improvement the quality of leadership is a key factor in building a school community where improvement is most likely to occur (Harris, 2002). It means an effective leader must have a vision, develop the staff, and be innovative and creative to achieve the vision so as to improve the school. Effective school leaders need to build the capacity for improvement within the schools. They must generate the conditions and create the climate for improvement to be initiated and sustained (Harris, 2002). In all, school leaders coordinate the whole process of change to ensure school improvement.

**Limitations in the School Improvement Field**

This section exposes some criticisms against school improvement by some authors. In the past few years, there have been some criticisms and limitations levelled against school improvement projects and process. Some are articulated thus:

1. Lauder et al. (1998) argue that in the school improvement field, there tends to be an undifferentiated approach to schools of varying socio-economic circumstances. It is as if one size fits all. For them, little account is taken of culture, context, socio-economic status, catchment areas, the trajectory of improvement and, indeed, of all independent variables (Harris & Bennett, 2001).
2. Another limitation in the field concerns an overemphasis on the school level (Harris, 2001; Scheerens, 1992). Most research in this area has failed to grapple with the complexity of change and development at different levels within the organization. Consequently, Harris (2001) maintains, "There is a growing need for researchers in this field to adopt a multi-level approach and to develop strategies which impact on the whole school, department, teachers and students level at the same time"( p. 16). Hence, Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) suggest that "Those who engage in school improvement need urgently to pay attention to the implications of multilevel modelling procedure for their programmes" (p. 47).
3. Gray et al. (1996) assert that "the proliferation of school improvement has only generated a proliferation of factors that 'seem to work"( p. 47). However, Harris (2001) argues that though there is a high degree of overlap of factors presented by the different researchers, they gave different interpretations and emphasis to these factors.
4. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) maintain that what is most worrisome in the whole issue is that many school improvement researchers have neglected the 'primacy of instruction.' For them, with all the research findings in school improvement, only a few tend to look at the classroom level.



In the same way, Scheerens (1992) warns that many of the factors identified in school improvement research are probably so context bound that they are not readily transferable, like:

1. The possibility of training leaders;
2. The value of assessment procedures in securing progress;

3. The modification of the school climate as changes develop;
4. The possibility that the organisational structure itself may promote or inhibit improvement.

Though there are some limitations, Harris (2001) suggests that a closer collaboration between school improvement and school effectiveness would be an obvious and pragmatic way out. This collaboration is possible as Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) argue when they called for a merger of the two fields. For them, the two disciplines are close and central to each other (Harris & Bennett, 2001).

**Key Lessons from School Improvement Research**

In a case study of Singapore and London schools, the research team draws four key lessons from the school improvement process (Mortimore et al., 2000, p. 142):

1. There is no single recipe for turning a school around, but there are common elements which include motivating staff, focusing on teaching and learning, enhancing the physical environment and changing the culture of the school.
2. Improvement must fit in with the grain of society rather than go against it. Indiscriminate borrowing of ideas may not achieve the desired results.
3. Resources in themselves do not guarantee improvement but help convince staff, parents, and students that society believes in the school and is willing to invest.
4. Change has to be carried out by the school itself. Friends are important, but change has to come from within.



Literature has shown that school improvement research has contributed to a better understanding of how change is initiated, implemented and institutionalised in school (Fullan, 1991; Northouse, 2013). It has gone a long way to providing practical theories that show the process of successful school level change thus.

1. In the first case, it reveals the vital importance of teacher development in school level change, and that teacher development is inextricably linked to school improvement (Hopkins et al., 1994).
2. Again, school improvement has shown and reinforced the vital place of leadership in promoting school level change. It has revealed the limitations of singular leadership, emphasizing decentralized and participatory leadership rather than top-down delegation (Jackson, 2000).
3. School improvement research has shown that there is no one blueprint for action for change or improvement in every school. It questions the assumption of the 'one size fits all' but advocates the importance of matching improvement strategy to school type (Hopkins et al., 1997).
4. School improvement efforts should be related to specific student outcomes. They should emphasise the importance of focusing attention on the student level and improving teaching and learning conditions within the classroom (Hopkins et al., 1997).
5. It has shown that there is a need to understand and work with school culture (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). Research in this area has demonstrated consistently that a school culture that promotes

> collegiality, trust, and collaborative working relationships and that focuses on teaching and learning is more likely to be self- renewing and responsive to improvement efforts (Hopkins, 1996).

In conclusion, those involved in the school improvement movement recognise the significance of leadership and school culture. They are aware that school culture is instrumental in bringing about improvement; of the need to assess a school's potential to accept change; of the complexity of changing a school's culture; of the 'worthwhileness' of identifying and agreeing with the direction of change; and of the significance of leadership in change and, therefore, managing culture (Prosser, 1999).

## Theoretical Assumptions Guiding the Study of Leadership and School Improvement

Leadership and school improvement are complex and contested phenomena, therefore, although a vast amount of theoretical literature and empirical evidence exist, their understanding demands some contextualisation meaning (Alexander et al., 2008; Williams, 2001). In the case of Nigeria, there is a drought of literature and research on school leadership and school improvement and no study can be found that shows how Western theories of leadership can be contextualised in the Nigerian situation. It is believed that good theories and findings in Western literature could inspire literature and research development in Nigerian educational system. This was done while still conscious of the setting where the study is carried out and takes into account the local culture and contextual factors where they are to be implemented. This agrees with the assertion of Dalin et al. (1994):

> *Both local and central initiatives work. An innovative idea that starts locally, nationally or with external donors can succeed, if programmes meet the criteria of national commitment, local capacity building, and linkage, in a configuration that makes sense for the particular country. (p. 252)*

Consequently, a behavioural approach translated into exploring styles, practices, and effectiveness is useful not only for the study of leadership in countries where research is scarce but arguably in any context especially when issues of effectiveness, outcome, and improvement are examined (Robinson, 2008). Researchers and theorists believe that leadership needs to be contextualised and that it is vital to explore the views of participants and their understanding of such phenomena in order to compare and contrast with the theory. This study seeks to examine the effectiveness of leadership, and its effects on student outcome and school improvement as they are viewed by school staff made up of principals and teachers. It further seeks to explore how leadership effectiveness could be enhanced through training to impact positively on schools.

**Summary**

The chapter provided an exposition of school improvement by exploring the relevant literature and empirical findings in this area in connection with this study. It has articulated the place of culture and change in the process of school improvement and has further examined the different approaches to school improvement and change process. The literature suggests that change takes time and there is no single recipe for turning the school around (Mortimore et al., 2000). The chapter has further indicated the importance of leadership in the process of change and school improvement (Huber, 2004). In doing so, it has shown a link between leadership and school improvement (Bush, 2008) and has further indicated the need to build leadership capacity to ensure school improvement (Harris, 2002).

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